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THE WOMEN OF *BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* AND THEIR ROLES: THEN AND
NOW

By

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B.A., Bellarmine University, 2010

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Sociology
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

May 2013

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The Women of *Battlestar Galactica* and Their Roles: Then and Now

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Thesis Approved on

April 11, 2013

by the following Thesis Committee:

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother and grandfather

Tracy Wright Fritch

and

Bill Wright

who instilled in me a love of science fiction

and a love of questioning the world around me.

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ABSTRACT

THE WOMEN OF *BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* AND THEIR ROLES: THEN AND NOW

Jessica Schlei Cox

April 11, 2013

This study used textual analysis to compare a science fiction television show from the 1970's to its remake in the 2000's concerning the representation of women in the shows and what that representation signifies about the United States' depiction of gender roles. *Battlestar Galactica*, its 1978 version and 2003 remake, was chosen. Coding sheets were utilized for each character for each episode of the show. Each coding sheet listed several themes such as toughness and gender stereotypes to be explored, and each character had a character profile based on the themes explored. It was predicted that the series would illustrate a change in gender roles and stereotypes between these two decades. After creating the character profiles, trends in each theme were determined. The trends signified a change in gender role depictions in science fiction television shows. These trends are directly correlated to changes in United States culture.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“Individual science fiction stories may seem as trivial as ever to the blinded critics and philosophers of today, but the core of science fiction, its essence, has become crucial to our salvation, if we are to be saved at all” (Asimov 1978). Isaac Asimov was one of the most prolific science fiction authors in the past two centuries. His statement could be analyzed in several different ways, but the heart of it centers on the idea that the genre of science fiction gives its audience a means to question the world. If one is familiar with Asimov’s works, then this quote is supported by his writings.

Science fiction, like other genres, has been used to question society, the world, and humanity. It allows an author to bring up some taboo subjects in a non-threatening way to bring these issues into the minds of those consuming the medium. Then, the consumers may begin to question. Theatre has often done this practice, such as in the works of William Shakespeare who often included non-threatening social statements about practices in his society that he did not necessarily agree with hence the inclusion (Gatton 2010). In an episode of the science fiction television show *Stargate: SG-1*, one character states, “Science fiction is an existential metaphor that allows us to tell stories about the human condition” (Wood 2006). This statement is immediately followed with the quote by Asimov.

Science fiction studies have often looked at how science fiction questions politics and societal organization. The original *Star Trek*, as an example, portrayed the world's political situation during the Cold War (BBC 2011). The Federation represented the United States and its allies, the Klingons represented the U.S.S.R., and the Romulans represented the Chinese. These interactions among these groups mimicked the real-world interactions of these nations. Other sociological media studies have looked at gender representations in films and television shows.

This paper examines *Battlestar Galactica*, a science fiction TV show. It uses textual analysis to compare the version of the show from the 1970s to a newer version from the 2000s to see how women are being represented within the show's context. With that, I used the theory of encoding and decoding as detailed by Stuart Hall as part of the analysis.

The questions that were answered are: 1) In these television shows, how are women being represented in terms of their gender roles within the context of the show?, 2) What does this representation of women's roles reveal about a modern society's, the United States namely, norms and beliefs?, and 3) What difference, if any, is there between the past show and the more recent show? The overall purpose of this study was to compare the portrayal of women in these shows in a past decade to the most recent decade. The ultimate goal for this research was a qualitative analysis of portrayals of female gender while comparing a modern show and a show from the past in order to see if those social norms regarding gender have become more lax or egalitarian.

The reason I chose to do this particular study stems from a previous study this researcher completed concerning Disney films and their gender representation. In that study, it was determined that Disney's feature length animated films had a higher level of

gender inequality in the 1930's, 1950's, 1990's, and 2000's. The lower levels of inequality were in the decades of the 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's, those are the decades when the second wave of the feminist movement took place. Science fiction, as stated previously, oftentimes reflects on a society's beliefs and norms. So, in order to look even deeper into the perception of women's roles in society, a comparison of shows from these decades needed to occur. I predicted that this new study will have similar results to the Disney study.

In this study, several terms were used: science fiction, ascribed gender roles, representation, stereotyping, cultural change, popular, and hegemony. These terms were used throughout the research in order to describe what I will be looking for in the research material.

There is disagreement by experts over a proper definition for science fiction. There appears to be a disagreement on whether or not to include the term fantasy under science fiction or if it is its own genre (Sobchack 1987). Science fiction often incorporates other genres such as comedy and drama, which makes defining it as a genre even more difficult (Sobchack 1987). Fantasy author and screenwriter George R. R. Martin (2011) states ,

Consider, for example, a case wherein a dead body is found drained of all blood. If a reader comes upon that scenario in a horror novel, he knows at once that there's a vampire lurking about somewhere. The cops may or may not twig to it, depending on the world the story is set in, but the reader knows the answer: the book says HORROR on the spine. If a reader comes upon the identical scenario in a mystery novel, though... Well, now he knows it is definitely *not* a vampire, no matters what it looks like. Some psycho killer who thinks he's a vampire is about as far as any "realistic" mystery novel will go. In both cases, genre expectations define and shape our reading experiences and color the ways in which we will perceive the events of the story (xi).

Martin has been writing fantasy novels and screenplays, including the book series *A Song*

of Fire and Ice and the television show *Beauty and the Beast*, for several decades. His words bring up a strong issue concerning assigned roles in media: the genre is a powerful aspect of a story. Each genre has certain aspects assigned to it which provide the consumer with a framework in which to place the story at hand. Science fiction however can include many aspects, few of which are strictly agreed upon depending on to whom you speak.

There are those who say that only hard science fiction can truly be called science fiction (Rickman 2004). Hard science fiction includes aspects rooted in real world science, such as space travel, time travel, and robots. There are fictional elements, but there is true science included, such as *Star Trek* and the writings of Isaac Asimov. Others say that science fiction can include anachronisms and other non-realistic aspects like fairy tales being real (Rickman 2004). Examples of this standpoint would be *Buffy: The Vampire Slayer* and *Xena: Warrior Princess*. These shows have monsters and magic, but nothing based in hard science like *Star Trek*. However, due to the fact that they have not happened and may not happen, they are considered science fiction.

For the sake of this research paper, I chose the first definition that hard science must be included in order to classify it as science fiction. In all of the science fiction anthologies I have read, the movies and shows discussed use this definition of science fiction in order to classify the example as science fiction (Rickman 2004). It is also the easiest definition to justify. Hard science is included with some fiction aspects, thus a basic description of this genre. The other definition seemed too arguable. There are fictional aspects, but hard science is not included which places that film or show under the fantasy/fairy tale label. However, I recognize the limitation of this definition as being gendered. Hard science fiction is seen as more realistic and more masculine. Fantasy is

seen as more fictional and more feminine. By defining science fiction as hard science fiction, thus excluding fantasy, the television shows are directed more toward male audience (Nixon 1992; Russ 1980).

Another definition to clarify was the gender role of women within the television shows. Women have been labeled with certain gender roles in Western society for many years which are often called ascribed gender roles (Butler 2004). Included in that list of ascribed roles are staying at home and raising children, cleaning, taking care of the husband, being emotionally and physically weak, not being aggressive or dominant, being sexualized and sexually submissive in some way, and putting appearances above other characteristics like intelligence (Butler 2004). Masculine roles are characteristics like exhibiting aggressive behavior, working outside of the home, being sexually dominant and active, expressing emotional stoicism and physical strength, and providing for and protecting his wife and children (Butler 2004). For this study, I looked at the roles the women portray in science fiction on TV and whether or not they fit with the ascribed gender roles given to women or if they cross over into the assigned male gender roles.

This study offered the opportunity for other research using the results as a model. For example, if I had found that the authors of these media from the past and present are both showing that the societal norms concerning the female gender are still bound within strict stereotypical roles, then another study could be developed to discover if the consumer is absorbing those role.

The next term to define was representation in a medium. According to Hall (1997), “representation connects meaning and language to culture and is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture” (15). Representation utilizes signs and images which stand for other things, and

it is the overall meaning of certain concepts through language (Hall 1997: 17). It is the link between concepts and language which allows people to connect real world events/objects with imaginary events/objects. There are two systems of representation: 1) the system by which all sorts of objects/events are matched with a set of concepts which are classified, and 2) language is necessary to construct meaning and a society requires a shared language so that meanings and concepts are represented (Hall 1997: 17).

According to Hall (1997), “Meaning is constructed by the system of representation and is fixed by the code which sets up the correlation between our conceptual system and our language system” (22). To put it simply, people in a culture share a system of meanings for different objects. Representation is how people interpret meaning of objects.

Michel Foucault developed the discursive approach to representation which better fits the purpose of this study. Foucault focused on the development of meaning through discourse, or relations to objects, statements, and subjects (Hall 1997: 51). His main concern was “with the knowledge provided by the human and social sciences which organizes conduct, understanding, practice, and belief, the regulation of bodies as well as whole populations” (Hall 1997: 51). Discourse includes elements of institutional regulation and practice.

In a research study of this type, the researcher needs to look at how different groups, particularly minority groups, in society are portrayed to understand a society’s beliefs and norms about those groups. The act of stereotyping reduces individuals and groups of people down to a few characteristics which are seen to be fixed by nature (Hall 1997: 257). People think that they know someone by analyzing the roles in which individual performs in society. Stereotyping takes a few points from these roles and simplifies them while making these characteristics more important than other aspects of

the roles. This exaggeration of characteristics and their importance is justified with the idea that these traits are natural (Hall 1997: 258). Stereotyping also separates society into normal and abnormal while society excludes the abnormal. Stereotyping also often occurs where there are extreme inequalities of power. Stereotyping in and of itself, according to Hall, is not detrimental to society, but, rather, it is the oppression caused by stereotyping that causes social discord.

Stereotyping is often discussed in popular media and in other institutions. The focus of this definition is on the act of stereotyping groups that are different than the dominant group within a society. According to Hall (1997), there are four reasons why difference in a society is important: “1. Difference matters because it is essential to meaning since without it meaning could not exist (there is a relationship of power between the poles of binary opposition), 2. We need difference because we can only construct meaning through dialogue with the ‘other’, 3. Culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different positions within a classificatory system so the marking of difference is thus the basis of that symbolic order which we call culture, and 4. “The ‘other’ is fundamental to the constitution of the self, to us as subjects, and to sexual identity” (Hall 1997: 234-238). Hall states that he believes that the act of stereotyping, or placing people into these categories, helps to create identity within the society by assigning meaning to the categories. Often those categories are a dichotomy separated by some sort of power difference.

Stereotypes change with any changes in culture which takes place over time. Hall (2005) defines cultural change as the process where certain cultural aspects are moved away from being active in popular life, or “actively marginalized” (64). Individuals are subjected to this cultural change because the dominant group ordains that this change is

necessary for the individuals within the subordinate groups within a society. The necessity of the change lies in the fact that individuals need to know their role within the society as related to the dominant group. It is in the dominant group's best interest to maintain power over the other group or groups in a society. These cultural changes are at the heart of the study of popular culture, and they act to "moralize the laboring classes, demoralize the poor, and to re-educate the society" (Hall 2005: 64). "Popular culture is the ground on which transformations are worked" (Hall 2005: 64). When one studies popular culture, one should begin with looking at containment and resistance to the dominant ideology (Hall 2005: 65). Transformations within society can come about or be perpetuated by popular culture. Culture can unite people and educate them on a certain belief system whether that system follows the dominant ideology or contradicts the dominant ideology. Hall (2005) continues with defining the commercial press (media) which distributes its mediums like magazines and movies through cultural mass markets (66). This press creates the cultural and political relations between the dominant class and the subordinate class or classes. Hall then tries to find a proper definition of popular because the media can only control individuals by producing a material the majority will consume.

The most common definition is that things are popular because individuals consume these things and enjoy them, but are thus manipulated by the dominant culture (Hall 2005: 66). The cultural industry, or the systems put in place to perpetuate culture such as the Hollywood film industry, can change what they represent and can implant those ideas promoted by the dominant class, but people are capable of recognizing this process. There is a continuous cultural struggle with times of resistance to the dominant culture and moments of suppression by the dominant culture (Hall 2005: 67).

The second definition of popular presented is easier and more descriptive, according to Hall (2005: 68). The popular is all things that people within a society do or have done. However, this definition is too inclusive, since the categories are too broad and categories change over time. Hall's (2005) definition of popular is where one looks at "those forms and activities which have their roots in the social and material conditions of particular classes which have been embodied in popular tradition and practice" (69). The popular must include the relations which define popular culture in a continuing tension to the dominant culture. Culture is constantly changing. What truly counts is the class struggle in and over culture (Hall 2005: 69). The cultural process, or cultural power, depends on the drawing of the line on what is in and what is not, while other institutions help to maintain this boundary (Hall 2005: 69). "Popular culture is one of the sites where this struggle for and against a culture of the powerful is engaged" (Hall 2005: 71).

Hegemony can be defined as the power or dominance that one group within a society has over another group or groups in that society (Lull 2003: 61). One can also call it the method for gaining power and maintaining that power. It is important to explore how hegemony is implemented within a television show in order to understand a society's beliefs and norms. Technology has made social domination more complex than in previous times, and ideological influence is a major factor in social power. According to Lull (2003), Gramsci's theory of ideological hegemony is that "mass media are tools that ruling elites use to 'perpetuate their power, wealth, and status [by popularizing] their own philosophy, culture and morality'" (62). Mass media allows for elements to enter individual consciousness that normally would not be there, while other socializing institutions maintain those elements in the mind of the individual.

Hegemony oftentimes goes easily undetected since the controlling forces of a society use the mass media to provide the subordinate classes with the concepts that allow them to make sense of their subordination (Lull 2003: 62). Social consent appears to be a more effective means of social control than force or coercion. The major socializing agencies all have relationships and all promote the socially accepted ideological orientations which sustain hegemony (Lull 2003: 63). American television has relationships with advertisers, retail groups, religious organizations, and the government. Hegemony is fragile, however, and requires “renewal and modification through the assertion and reassertion of power” (Lull 2003: 64).

Science fiction has always pushed the limits when it comes to story-telling. It uses real facts in order to, in some way, support the reality of the fiction being presented to the audience. Women in these television shows exhibit some type of role, and those roles are often stereotyped as being male or female and thus perpetuated in society. Understanding the concepts of popular, cultural change, hegemony, and representation allows for a greater analysis of these popular science fiction television shows and how they portray women. With these terms defined and explained, I began to look at the previous literature in order to discover my methods of research which would answer my two research questions.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

For this literature review, there are three major categories of works that I looked into in order to thoroughly understand the subject matter. The first category concerns works on gender in society and the roles related to gender. The second category discusses media and its role in the construction of gender. The third category consisted of works about science fiction and other related media concerning gender and women. I have thus organized the review of the literature under those three categories. From these categories, I determined themes that guided my research methods.

GENDER AND SOCIETY

According to Judith Lorber, a prominent scholar on gender and its construction, the idea of gender is deeply rooted within society (2003). Gender is created from interaction with others and is recreated when those interactions change. Since gender is so entwined with the daily lives of people, people are often uncomfortable until they can place a person into a gender category and often do not notice how gender is produced (Lorber 2003: 100). Gender is constructed at birth depending on with what genitalia a baby is born. The parents dress and name the baby according to the baby's genitalia. The baby is then

treated like that gender category and behaves according to that gender category (Lorber 2003: 100).

Gender roles change as society changes, so gender representation should change from one decade to another even if it is only minute changes. According to Lorber (2003), society constructs these roles including similarities and differences as well as assigns responsibilities to each category (101). Personalities and other characteristics can develop from gender causing different life experiences. Lorber (2003) claims that,

As a social institution, gender is a process of creating distinguishable social statuses for the assignment of rights and responsibilities. As part of a stratification system that ranks these statuses unequally, gender is a major building block in the social structures built on these unequal statuses. As a *process*, gender creates the social differences that define “woman” and “man” (101).

Without society determining what is male and what is female, then gender would not be such a definable category in which people organize their lives. Gender would also not be something by which we subjugate members of society. Gender still puts men above women, even though rebellion has somewhat changed gender norms within society (Lorber 2003: 102). Those expectations created by gender are maintained by sanctions from peers and authority figures.

Lorber (2003) states that cultural meanings, social relationships, and power politics are what create human nature instead of biology (104). So, the core of a person's being is formulated by culture. Culture holds a great power over individuals. Any message culture tries to convey can change how a person acts. In terms of gender, if some aspect of culture tells a consumer that women should be subordinate to men, then an individual may believe that message. It is important to look at the meaning encoded in the culture in order to gauge what actual social changes concerning gender perception have taken place if any.

Each society has its own definition of gender, but it is important to know what role gender actually plays in each society. Michael Kimmel (2011) discusses that all societies are divided by gender to varying degrees, but males in most societies are dominant and all societies have gender inequality (62). This division is typically based around labor. According to Kimmel (2011), gender consists of activities that an individual does and is a product of a person's interactions with other people (137). Gender becomes an aspect of interaction, so people perform it in every interaction in their lives. The world is thusly gendered, and the social world is based on gender inequality. In order to gain a well-rounded view of the characters within the show, it is important to explore their relationships with others.

Kimmel's (2011) work helped to explain how relationships affect women's identity. Even intimate relationships are affected by gender, whether it is a friendship or a sexual relationship (Kimmel 2011: 317). The realm of relationships typically identifies with women's experiences in friendships, and the aspects important to these relationships are "emotional expressiveness, dependency, the ability to nurture, intimacy" (Kimmel 2011:319). Gender stereotypes are reinforced by claiming that women are more emotionally expressive thus making women's way of maintaining friendships as more important. Men's ways of being intimate are often seen as less, even if it is only just different from feminine intimacy.

MEDIA AND GENDER

In order to better understand exactly how the media creates gender identity and promotes gender stereotype and gender oppression, I looked at sources that discuss the process by which media is created and represents a society's norms. Debra Baker Beck (2003) claims that, "There is no objective 'feminine'....only a culturally defined concept created and perpetuated in part by media texts" (413). Beck (2003) believes that the mass media shows the feminist struggle as conforming to dominant social norms so that way the feminist movement fits within a "field of allowable images" (413). The media remains controlled by male decision makers, so the chance of the media altering the dominant male gendered viewpoint to show women as being equal is low.

Women who are shown in the media as going against gender norms, also known as feminists, often are portrayed as women who hate men and want to destroy family values (Beck 2003: 415). Many young women are rejecting the feminist movement due to this negative portrayal of feminists. Beck (2003) cites a study where young women were interviewed about their perception of the feminist movement where the reasons for rejecting the feminist movement illustrate how ingrained stereotypes shown in the mass media are (416). It is conceded that the feminist movement did at least cause the networks to appeal to women by expanding how women are shown in the media, but "these programs often produced contradictory and troubling representations of femininity and 'independent' women, an most of the social issues raised were domesticated" (Lorber 2003: 419). There are changes for the better, such as showing more single women in the media, but many issues still remain.

By delving into the underlying text of a television show, a deep analysis of the possible changes in societal norms can take place. A discussion can then come about in order to create a plan for resolution of the remaining issues. By comparing shows from different decades, a mapping of actual social change and not just perceived social change concerning gender norms can occur.

Media has a great effect on the individuals in society. According to Kimmel (2011), one of the major institutions in society is the media, and it plays an important role in constructing gender identities (290). The media, as an institution, must maintain inequality by “creat[ing] the differences and then to attempt to conceal its authorship so that those differences seem to flow from the nature of things” (Kimmel 2011: 290). Television has “his” and “her” shows in order to cater to gender categories. When one is shown images of inequality, it can cause a person to have more stereotypical ideas. “For example, the more television you watch, the more gender-stereotypic are your gender attitudes likely to be” (Kimmel 2011: 295).

Kimmel’s work provides a connection among society, gender, and the media. To understand how these three institutions work together to socialize individuals is the basis of this study. My analysis aims to show whether there has been any change in the depiction of women from one decade to another and whether gender stereotypes about women have been challenged in science fiction on television.

Understanding the nature of television is important since it differs greatly from books, movies, and other forms of media. Television attempts to reach a wide audience as well as a specific demographic. It is often filmed in the same year it is aired, and advertisements placed in commercial breaks help influence the premise of the show.

Zemach and Cohen (1986) discuss the differing studies that have been done that have

analyzed women's depiction on television as well as perception of women in reality. Their work helps provide a stronger example of how women are being shown in the media especially concerning gender stereotypes. Zemach and Cohen emphasize that content analysis remains one of the most common analytic tools with these topics. This method has often found many instances of women being stereotyped in television. The authors quote several studies completed on this subject and the results of these studies,

Women were generally shown on the screen less often than men and had fewer major roles ... Women were depicted as passive, dependent, submissive, and weak. Men, however, were presented as strong, dominant, rational, independent, and active... Women also were shown as warmer and more friendly, as more emotional and as less rational... They usually appeared younger, more attractive than their male counterparts... and often served as sex symbols... Women on television also were confined frequently to the home environment... women who worked usually were shown in traditionally "feminine" occupations such as nurses, secretaries, teachers, servants, or actresses (Zemach and Cohen 1986: 428).

So, in many previous gender studies of this medium, women were more often stereotyped in various ways from roles to appearance. Zemach and Cohen (1986) do say that there is a trend toward a more egalitarian representation of women in television, but they believe that television "lags behind real social changes" (428).

Romantic relationships are a common institution in American society, whether those relationships are heterosexual or homosexual. Those relationships help define an individual and help an individual's integration into society. Just as Kimmel (2011), Holz, Gibson, and Ivory (2009) explain the importance of relationships in gender identity, particularly romantic relationships. Holz et al. (2009) looked at the power relationships among couples. According to the authors, in heterosexual couples, there is a perceived power distribution where the men have more power than the women (Holz et al. 2009: 172). Homosexual couples believed in a balance of power in the relationship, but a large

majority of these couples perceived a power imbalance in their relationship. The authors (2009) also state that, “Women and sexual minorities have a history of underrepresentation in television, and this lack of visibility has resulted in narrow and stereotyped depictions of both groups” (174).

Moreover, women characters are outnumbered by male characters and were defined by their marital role (Holz et al. 2009: 174). Women tend to be more provocatively dressed, and men have more speaking time in television shows. In a three decade study of prime-time television dramas, it was determined that stereotypes of males and females have “remained stable over the 3 decades observed... male characters outnumbered female characters, that more men than women worked outside the home, and that the percentage of women working outside the home had not significantly increased” (Holz et al. 2009: 175). The study did find, however, that women’s occupations had become less stereotyped in the more recent decades.

SCIENCE FICTION AND GENDER

Science fiction has been studied by many different fields over the years. Film studies and literature studies have gone into depth concerning several aspects of this genre. However, sociology, although it has studied the media at length, has yet to truly explore this eclectic genre. Furthermore, women have been studied often in science fiction films but not much in science fiction television shows. Television shows, according to Fiske (1987), provide an insight into the social norms of a society more in line with the timeline of a society. Films take several years to be produced and released while television shows are all within a year in almost real time allowing for a more accurate analysis of the social norms. This literature review analyzes the work of sociologists and scholars concerning media studies on women and other roles. It discusses textual analysis methods which were the data collecting method for the study.

I first looked at works that discussed the purpose of science fiction and whether or not it reflected the time period in which it was produced. I also looked at works that provided more background information on common themes within science fiction to help me to better understand what I would be seeing in the television shows. Gregg Rickman (2004) encourages his readers to not only know the landmark films of the genre but to understand science fiction's issues by analyzing them including the time and place in which they were made. Rickman (2004) explores the science fiction films of the 1950's, which has been considered the golden age of the science fiction film. He discusses the time period in which these films were made and how that influenced the topic of the film (Rickman 2004). It was post-WWII, so many of the science fiction films at the time were

apocalyptic. It is believed that these apocalyptic films were cathartic and helped the consumers deal with their emotions held over from the war (Rickman 2004: 113).

Many hard science fiction television shows include artificial intelligence, namely robots and cyborgs (humanoid machines). It is important to understand humanity to create a complete character profile for each female character. Rickman (2004) discusses the idea of being “post-human” in science fiction by using the works of Philip K. Dick as reference material (270). The idea of “post-human” is to ask the question: What is it to be human? Many science fiction pieces seek to answer this question, especially when cyborgs (a person whose physical abilities are enhanced by mechanical parts built into the body) or another similar being is being used within the story (Rickman 2004: 287-311). This work provides tools to understand how science fiction actually discusses societal matters like WWII as well as more abstract subjects like humanity.

Humanity often appears as a theme in science fiction since many of the plots include beings that appear human but are not, such as aliens and cyborgs. Sean Redmond’s work (2007) as in Rickman’s science fiction anthology, includes an analysis of cyborgs and what they represent in science fiction (155-216). Redmond also details cyborgs and how they are represented in different films particularly in their gender representation (Redmond 2007: 182-190). He details the science fiction films from the 1950s and how they relate to WWII and the Cold War, which further strengthens the argument brought up in the work by Rickman. Science fiction is often a means by which to discuss a major societal event or norms in a non-threatening way. This work begins to delve more into how gender relates to certain aspects of science fiction such as concerning cyborgs.

Cyborgs (human and machine hybrids) and other robotic beings such as androids (humanoid robots) are artificial representations of humans. They are designed to act

human in order to either infiltrate some human group or to make the humans they serve more comfortable by appearing more natural. Often included in hard science fiction stories, cyborgs are important because they are meant to illustrate to the audience what human nature is and what it has become. The show I ultimately chose, *Battlestar Galactica*, has both cyborgs and androids as major characters in the show. The audience most often sees female versions of these artificial beings. Humanity in this case is an important theme because these beings show the audience the author's and society's commentary on the nature of humanity, including gender. If an android or cyborg represents the pure essence of a human being, then the gender stereotypes may be explored.

Science fiction reflects the culture and time period in which it was created, and it provides a method in which to question the nature of humanity. Vivian Sobchack (1987) details how modern society has entered a time in which mass culture is so involved with cognitive dissonance (a discomfort caused by holding conflicting ideas, beliefs, values, emotional reaction simultaneously) and cognitive estrangement (the effect based on the reader's realization that the setting of a text differs from the reader's reality) concerning space, time, and the alien, that the fantastical has become commonplace which could erase the genre line surrounding science fiction (17-25). That would cause that genre to be absorbed by others such as drama. The central thesis of this work is about how the changes in American culture in the decade between 1977 and 1986 have affected science fiction and, where science fiction stands as a genre (Sobchack 2007: 17-25).

According to Sobchack (2007), there have been many changes during this decade, namely in technology which affects daily living (223). Science fiction films have become the way these changes in consciousness and human perception of the world are shown to

individuals. She lists several changes in the common themes of science fiction; for example, in the 1950's the alien was a malignant figure, but it was not often a benign figure like E.T. (225). Another interesting change is that humans in the films have begun to act more like machines while robots, computers, androids, and cyborgs have become more human. Sobchack (1987) argues that, "[W]hether mainstream or marginal, the majority of contemporary (and popular) science fiction films celebrate rather than decry an existence so utterly familiar and yet so technologically transformed that traditional categories of space, time, being, and 'science fiction' no longer quite apply" (230).

Sobchack (1987) accounts for these changes as the effects of the new structures of organization of postmodern capitalism. Born in the United States of America and with the advancement of technology, multinational capitalism has altered the previous way people lived and made of space, time, and the world. Late capitalism has transformed both the structure of people's social lives and the aesthetic character of cultural representations of individuals and groups (Sobchack 1987: 244). Sobchack (1987) sees the first golden age of American science fiction film as coinciding with the introduction of the "consumer culture" in the post-World War II period, as technology and culture began to totally replace nature and all branches of the economy became fully industrialized for the first time in history (255). The era of 1950s science fiction films emphasized the strangeness of this new technology. By the second golden age from the late 1970s to the present, technology has become familiar and been accepted as natural. These films "celebrat[ed] the consumable artifacts and specular productions of late capitalism" (Sobchack 1987: 253).

When Sobchack (1987) begins to talk about modern science fiction, she cites Jean Baudrillard's argument that we live in an environment in which everything is a

representation or simulation (268). Movies are no more real than electronic images. Because of this change, science fiction has begun utilizing an excess of scenography which “substitutes quantity for depth and accumulation for movement” (Sobchack 1987: 269). This new "entropic aesthetic" finds pleasure in "trash and waste, pollution and decay" (Sobchack 1987: 263). Sobchack interprets this as the triumph of late-capitalist consumer culture.

Furthermore, Sobchack claims that because people today feel alienated, individuals have become comfortable with their alienation. People now are not terrified of invading aliens like people in the 1950s. ““Today's science fiction films either posit that 'aliens are like us' or that 'aliens R U.S.'” (Sobchack 1987: 293). Outer space aliens are no longer seen as the "Other" and are seen instead as images of those within a society. In some science fiction films, the alien is like a person only more human. However, this personification implies that human being is the "original model" which is to be used to judge all creatures (Sobchack 1987: 297). Sobchack’s work focuses mainly on how science fiction and society are intertwined. Science fiction changes when society changes. Science fiction has also become more abstract as society has become less solidified.

To better understand exactly how science fiction affects gender, one must look at examples of science fiction films or television shows and how they relate to the culture in which they are created. Annette Kuhn (1990) provides several examples from different science fiction films and how the films portray women and their gender roles which in turn effects the culture in a society. Kuhn (1990) emphasizes the works of the 1980's such as *Blade Runner*, *The Terminator*, *The Thing*, and *Videodrome*, but it is *Alien* that is the most discussed work. Kuhn (1990) is more interested in what science fiction films do in

cultural terms (cultural instrumentality) than in what these films are as isolated texts. She considers science fiction cinema broadly as a form of sociological evidence (Kuhn 1990). Thomas Byers contrasts more progressive science fiction films such as *Alien* and *Blade Runner* with a more conservative one, *Star Trek*. Byers observes that in the trekker film, "Kirk and all he stands for-patriarchal white America, the sex-role division that approves the father's non-participation in the work of child-rearing, and the benign violence of proper authority have been vindicated" (Byers 1990: 48). Kuhn and Byers provide several examples of the different representations of men versus women in science fiction media. They also both claim that science fiction represents current viewpoints in society, and that science fiction offers evidence of changing social norms.

I also wanted to look at how gender is represented in other films, not just science fiction, so that way I would have a well-rounded list of themes to explore. Turning to works on women in the media, namely television and film, Maggie Humm (1997) offers a discussion of feminist theories and contemporary film. Humm (1997) finds that feminist film theorists see that all films contain a conscious pattern of censorship. The films assume the viewer to be a Caucasian male whose voyeurism is encouraged through narrative techniques. As Humm (1997) points out, "the processes by which individual women recognize themselves as female are often caught up in compulsions of the visual..." (179). This work helped me understand the options that are available in the type of qualitative research concerning women.

If an audience is assumed to be a Caucasian male who is only interested in a voyeuristic viewing of a television show, then women are going to be portrayed in certain ways. Women being portrayed as assertive and violent does not typically fit into the gender stereotypes ascribed to women. However, with characters such as Buffy, Xena,

and Lara Croft, toughness in female characters comes into question. Toughness is often a characteristic used to describe men, but Sherrie A. Inness (1999) focuses on the evolution of women in the media, namely comic books, literature, television, and film, and their “toughness.” Inness defines the word tough and how toughness is represented in the different forms of media. Men are tough through attitude, actions, and even clothing (Inness 1999: 2). For example, men who are tough hide their emotions and wear things like leather. But, Inness does say that there is no solid definition of toughness since even the dictionary definition has multiple meanings, such as one meaning states that toughness is aggressiveness while another states that toughness is strong minded and resolute and yet another states that toughness is being physically rugged.

Inness (1999) uses the example of man’s toughness as compared to stereotypical women's roles to analyze women who are “tough” especially since there is a lack of tough girls in the media which affects how women see themselves as gendered subjects (4). She also makes the argument that toughness should be studied since the media construct of toughness shows how the media not only expands or limits the concepts of gender and identity but it also shows how gendered identities are represented in popular culture (Inness 1999: 7-8). Tough girls show a change in gender identities (Inness 1999: 9).

The ultimate goal of the work is to highlight the boundaries and transgressions of tough girl characters with the hope that this analysis will allow for the potential for reevaluating gender limits (10). Inness (1999) makes certain to inform the reader that although a woman may be represented as tough, her toughness is mitigated by traditional female roles and sexuality (178-9). There is an ongoing cultural battle in society about whether or not women should be allowed to possess the same tough attributes as men

which is why tough girls are mitigated by their stereotypical norms of femininity (Inness 1999: 178).

Inness (1999) argues that the ways in which popular media and culture define and restrict notions of both masculinity and femininity undermines the ability of tough girls to represent toughness without perceived mitigation. According to Inness (1999), “American culture has become so accustomed to the notion of male/masculinity and female/femininity, that anything else looks like a travesty” (21). Inness (1999) is not arguing that true toughness must shed any femininity, but that the inability of American culture to shed any notions of femininity and masculinity is the issue. She further argues that working against rigid identity oppositions is what allows the tough girl her power and subversion. She is not arguing for the masculinized tough girl; rather, she is advocating the need to undermine the posited or presumed naturalness of gender (Inness 1999). This work brings up an important theme in the modern representation of women and if toughness truly provides a more equal playing field for women in the media or if it just superimposes stereotypical masculine traits on women in order to make the woman more independent.

One important aspect of this study is whether or not women in these new shows are actually challenging gender stereotypes. Inness (2004) asks, "Do these characters afford a more powerful vision of womanhood than that afforded to women by media in the past? Or are they merely the newest trend in beautiful women fighting crime ... doing little to challenge or question gender stereotypes?" (14).

Sharon Ross (2004) discusses the female friendships represented in *Xena: The Warrior Princess* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* as an example of challenge to gender stereotypes. Friendships, like other relationships, help create an individual's identity.

Ross bases her analysis in the feminist theory of epistemic negotiation, "a process of building knowledge in which individuals come together as a community to discuss what they each know and then debate how best to address the situation at hand" (Inness 2004: 232). Ross argues that the relationships between Xena and Gabrielle and between Buffy and Willow are representations to the power of female bonding as a way to resist the patriarchal pressures of society. Shared experiences strengthen the friendships and these experiences make the characters better heroes. She states that the concept of toughness is transformed "from a state of loneliness and separatism to a mode of heroism that embraces empathy and community" (Inness 2004: 250).

Jeffrey Brown (2004) examines the "Bad Girls" of action films and comic books, which Lara Croft embodies. Brown sees the over-the-top construction of the Bad Girl ("huge, gravity-defying breasts, mile-long legs, perpetually pouty lips, and perfectly coifed big hair") as "an almost hysterical mask of femininity" (Brown 2004: 63). Brown also argues that the "overfetishization" (Brown 2004: 58) of Bad Girls, combined with their hypermasculine violent abilities, results in the destabilization of "natural" gender roles, since these characters simultaneously enact both femininity and masculinity. By going against the ascribed gender roles, the Bad Girl subverts society.

Many sources on women in modern media discuss Lara Croft and what she actually represents: a stereotype or a step forward in women's representation. Lara Croft remains one of the best examples of the modern tough woman in the media. The character of Lara Croft is detailed more by Helen W. Kennedy (2002). Kennedy (2002) asks what Lara Croft represents: a feminist icon or something derogatory regarding women? Kennedy states that there have been many discussions on this dichotomy of the character. The problem is: is Lara Croft a good role model for young girls? Kennedy

(2002) states that “the efficacy and limitations of existing feminist frameworks through which an understanding of the kinds of gendered pleasures offered by Lara Croft as a game's character and cultural icon can be reached” (1). Lara Croft's character represents the change in women's roles in the computer game and video game genre. The hero in this type of media has typically been male (Kennedy 2002: 2). She represents a female hero and not just a secondary character. The game was released with a lot of publicity behind it by Sony. It also featured advanced graphics and game play for the time, i.e. cinematic realism. Kennedy states that the success of the game can be attributed to the game's use of new design techniques, its narrative story, and the use of a female hero. Kennedy quotes several fans and previous researchers who posit that Lara's sexuality played the largest role in the game's success. The marketing for the game enforced her sexuality to a great extent. The marketing did focus on women a great deal as well by utilizing “girl power” (Kennedy 2002: 2).

Kennedy discusses the possible feminist approaches to Lara Croft. One approach would be to accept and even welcome active female heroines in traditionally male genres of media (Kennedy 2002: 3). But, the dichotomy of sexuality and physical prowess causes ambivalence between feminists and non-feminists. Mary Russo, a scholar Kennedy refers to in her article, describes these heroines who perform great feats of strength and agility as “stunted bodies,” or women who go against conventional understandings of the limits of the female body (Kennedy 2002: 3). This breaking with convention does provide a strong and powerful image of femininity to young girls and even young boys. The action genre typically makes males overly strong while females are oppressed, so these images of strong women are often celebrated. “The transgressive stunting body of the action heroine is replicated in the figure of Lara. Her occupation of a

traditionally masculine world, her rejection of particular patriarchal values and the norms of femininity, and the physical spaces that she traverses are all in direct contradiction of the typical location of femininity within the private or domestic space” (Kennedy 2002: 3).

Women’s bodies and overall physical appearance is often the subject of media criticisms of how the media creates the ideal body image in women. So, knowing how the television shows are portraying the female body will help to better understand a society’s beliefs on femininity. Feminist film studies also have an approach that does not look at these masculinized female bodies in a positive way. Laura Mulvey's essay on the function of women within film narrative offers a different perspective. Mulvey claims that this type of female body, “operates as an eroticized object of the male gaze and the fetishistic and scopophilic pleasures which this provides for the male viewer...[also] that 'active' or 'strong' female characters signify a potential threat to the masculine order” (Kennedy 2002: 4). That threat posed by this female character is made safe by phallicizing the female body.

Lara Croft also has a voyeuristic appeal to the viewer. According to some research, Lara is the perfect object of desire because of her appearance and her performance. She is both masculine (guns and athleticism) and feminine (very large breasts, large lips, small waist, and large eyes). Because of this dichotomy, Kennedy (2002) claims that Lara can be appealing to both men and women (5). “These virtual 'babes' are ludic postmodern signifiers par excellence (Morton, 1999), endlessly available for resignification, and providing multiple possibilities for narcissistic pleasure...people have always invested emotionally in literary, film and television characters. This could also be seen to underline the fact that male sexual desire and fantasy are always bound up

in an image of femininity which is virtual” (Kennedy 2002: 10). Hypersexualizations of femininity are ways of containing and oppressing women. By encoding technological imagery as a masculine preserve and making femininity an aesthetic presence instead of an active one, excludes females from enjoying the interface of the game.

Lara Croft represents what Inness was discussing in that women are shown as being tough through actions, the use of weapons, and other stereotypical male traits. However, a tough girl, in this case Lara Croft, has to be sexualized or feminized in some other way to mitigate her toughness. By feminizing this tough girl character, the author makes her palatable to the target male audience. In many genres that traditionally focus on a male audience, women that do not fit the stereotypical feminine role are treated similarly to Lara Croft. Since, this study focuses on hard science fiction, a typically male dominated genre, it is important to look at any tough girl characters to see if they are like Lara Croft: tough but sexualized.

There were not many studies to be found that actually revolved around some of the television shows I was considering for the study. One of the shows, *Battlestar Galactica*, had a few works written about it and ultimately it was the show I chose. Tiffany Potter and C.W. Marshall (2007) discuss the show’s choice of making the Cylons human-like instead of as typical robots. The Cylon women are portrayed as sexy while the men are cunning. Cylons are either shown as humanity’s destroyer or as their savior depending on which Cylon is being portrayed in a particular episode. Each article debates the portrayal and aspects of humanity as well as gender concerning these mechanical beings. Carla Kungl (2008) analyzes the recasting of this newer version to include a female Starbuck (the original was male) and how the audience reacted to the recasting. The recasting brought up the issues of toughness, gender, and equality. These studies on

Battlestar Galactica helped provide more insight into some of the themes I studied during my analysis of the show especially concerning some of the characters. Since I had no previous knowledge of the show and its plot, these studies also gave me some background information on the series.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND METHODS

Textual analysis has often been used to look deeper into some type of media to get at the heart of what may be going on within the text. It is important to study those who consume media in order to get at how they are interpreting what they have absorbed based on their experiences. However, by utilizing textual analysis one can get an idea of what the author of the media is trying to convey to the consumer. The main question, especially when concerning this particular study, could be: Is the author trying to pass on societal norms or is the author trying to subvert societal norms? A partner study to this one could be to have subjects watch the medium and then interview them on what they took away from it and compare it to the author's intention. For the sake of this research, I wanted to focus on the actual medium and see what is truly going on within it and what it could possibly mean.

To assist me in the analysis of the text, I looked at several works on textual analysis and media studies. Stuart Hall (1973) takes up and challenges long held assumptions on how media messages are produced, circulated and consumed, proposing a new theory of communication. Hall's essay challenged all three components of the mass communications model. It argued that (i) meaning is not simply fixed or determined by the sender; (ii) the message is never transparent; and (iii) the audience is not a passive

recipient of meaning. For example, a documentary film on asylum seekers that aims to provide a sympathetic account of their plight does not guarantee that audiences will also view them sympathetically. Despite its being realistic and recounting facts, the documentary form itself must still communicate through a sign system (the aural-visual signs of TV) that simultaneously distorts the intentions of producers and evokes contradictory feelings in the audience. Distortion is built into the system, rather than being a 'failure' of the producer or viewer.

Hall proposed a model of mass communication which highlighted the importance of active interpretation within relevant codes. Hall (1973) rejected textual determinism, noting that 'decodings do not follow inevitably from encodings' (136). In contrast to the earlier models, Hall thus gave a significant role to the 'decoder' as well as to the 'encoder'. Hall referred to various phases in the Encoding/Decoding model of communication as moments.

There is a 'lack of fit' Hall argues 'between the two sides in the communicative exchange.' That is, between the moment of the production of the message ('encoding') and the moment of its reception ('decoding'). In 'Encoding/decoding', Hall (1973) suggests media messages accrue a common-sense status in part through their performative nature. Through the repeated performance, staging or telling of the narrative, a culturally specific interpretation becomes not only simply plausible and universal, but is elevated to "common-sense."

John Fiske (1987) took Hall's theories and expanded upon them. Fiske (1987) begins with a discussion about what the word culture means when discussing cultural studies. He makes the argument that culture in this sense is neither aesthetic nor humanist, but is political in terms of living in an industrial society. So, "cultural studies is

concerned with the generation and circulation of meanings in industrial societies” (Fiske 1987: 254). Meanings and their creation make up culture. They are also tied with social structure and can only be explained in terms of that structure and its history. That structure is maintained by the meanings that culture produces. These meanings are of social experience and of self and both represent the same cultural process.

Industrial societies are divided, namely by gender but also by race, class, religion, etc. “Society, then, is not an organic whole but a complex network of groups, each with different interests and related to each other in terms of their power relationship with the dominant classes” (Fiske 1987: 255). All social relations revolve around social power, which is dynamic. “In the domain of culture, this contestation takes the form of the struggle for meaning, in which the dominant classes attempt to 'naturalize' the meanings that serve their interests into the 'common sense' of the society as a whole whereas subordinate classes resist this process in various ways, and to varying degrees, and try to make meanings that serve their interests” (Fiske 1987: 255). Fiske also claims that culture is ideological.

Structuralism influences cultural studies in that reality can only be explained through cultural meaning systems like language. Truth can only be understood in terms of how it is made, for whom it is made, and when it is made. Consciousness thus is not a product of truth or reality, but of culture, society, and history.

Ideology is a dynamic process based on people’s relationship to the society. The theory of overdetermination produces a model of the relationship between ideology and culture that is not determined solely by economic relations. This theory incorporates the idea of ideological state apparatuses (ISAs), which are social institutions like the family that produce in people the tendency to behave and think in socially acceptable ways

according to social norms. All ISAs perform similar ideological work: patriarchal, capitalist, individualist, and promote competition. However, they present themselves as socially neutral (not favoring one class over another).

Fiske (1987) then defines the difference between the individual and the subject. The individual is produced by nature while the subject is produced by culture (a social construction from ISAs and ideology). Media and language are the major players in the construction of the subject. Fiske talks about the method of communication called “hailing,” which sets up the interaction between two people. Interpellation is the larger process of when language constructs social relations for both people in an act of communication and then locates those people in the macro level of social relations.

Social relations are based on someone’s social location. Social location oftentimes has a basis within power stratification within society. The theory of hegemony, to cultural theorists, describes the process by which a dominant class wins the willing consent of the subordinate classes to the system that ensures their subordination. In hegemonic theory, ideology is constantly up against forces of resistance. Consequently it is engaged in a constant struggle not just to extend its power, but even to hold on to the territory it has already colonized” (Fiske 1987: 259-260).

Social relations develop cultures and create the meanings of objects that members of the culture share. “This definition of culture as a constant site of struggle between those with and those without power underpins the most interesting current work in cultural studies” (Fiske 1987: 260). Fiske then brings up Hall's article on encoding and decoding. Hall suggests that television programs may generate the meanings which affect people’s social situations. Reading or viewing television is a process of negotiation between the viewer and the text. Fiske’s (1987) use “of the word 'negotiation' is

significant, for it implies both that there is a conflict of interests that needs to be reconciled in some way, and that the process of reading television is one in which the reader is an active maker of meanings from the text, not a passive recipient of already constructed ones” (260).

Individuals absorb media in different ways depending on their position within the culture. To address this concept, Hall developed a theory of preferred readings. Under that theory there are three broad reading categories developed from three social positions that someone may occupy in relation to the dominant ideology: the dominant, the negotiated, and the oppositional. “The preferred reading theory proposes that TV programs generally prefer a set of meanings that work to maintain the dominant ideologies, but that these meanings cannot be imposed, only preferred” (Fiske 1987: 261). Fiske provides *Magnum, P.I.* as an example for this part of the article (ideology of patriarchal capitalism). Masculinity like all other ideological constructs must remain dynamic by showing males exerting authority.

Fiske (1987) claims that the reader who fits more with the dominant ideology will use it to reaffirm that ideology in themselves (how he or she makes sense of themselves and the world). Hall also details the idea of the negotiated reading, which inflects the dominant ideology towards the social experience of a particular viewing group. Fiske (1987) uses the example of women who watch *Magnum, P.I.* Some negotiated readings are done by those who read with the text so they are ideologically cooperative and they attempt to match their social experience with the ideology represented in the text. All groups must shift the text to fit their social position, making them negotiated. Negotiation of texts can range from the ideologically central to the deviant. Reading negotiations that

focus more on the deviant become positional because they go against the text and deconstructs the dominant ideology.

Fiske then brings up screen theory, which is a combination of structuralism and semiotics with psychoanalysis and Marxism. “For if society is seen not as homogeneous, but as a structure of different interest groups, and if television is to appeal to a large number of people in a society, then it follows that the television audience must not be seen as a homogeneous mass, but as a mix of social groups each in a different relationship to the dominant ideology” (Fiske 1987: 266). It argues that the power of the text over the subject viewing the media. Screen theory also discusses the analysis of the textual strategies that operate to position the subject within the dominant ideology.

Fiske (1987) makes the argument that television text is a discourse in that it is a socially located way of understanding a social experience. A discourse is a way of thinking about a certain topic that is produced socially, which is defined by reference to “the area of social experience that it makes sense of, to the location from which that sense is made, and to the linguistic system by which that sense is both made and circulated” (Fiske 1987: 268). The reader's consciousness is made up of discourses which creates that person's social experiences. When the reader reads the television text the discourses that make up both the text and the consciousness come together. The reading of that text becomes a negotiation between the two: the social experiences of the reader and the social sense inscribed by the program. This negotiation is discursive.

Although considering how the audience absorbs the media that they consume is important, one must determine what information is actually being presented to the audience. Authors have differing purposes for their work. An author could be trying to reinforce societal norms or trying to defy societal norms. The individuals could interpret

the information in several ways, but knowing the original information is vital to understand the connection between society and the individual. Textual analysis can open the door to other research ideas that would use an active audience. Also, textual analysis can be theory generating, while other studies can be theory testing. I am more interested at this point is author's purpose in creating the text not necessarily how someone actually interprets it since the author's purpose could indicate either societal norms are being perpetuated or subverted.

Textual analysis is a method that reveals the "meaning behind the text." "It reveals not only what is there, but also what is absent such as unspoken assumptions, prejudgments, and ideological positions" (Marshall 2010: 577). This method allows for unadulterated analysis without a researcher's personal experiences coming into play. Norms that society attempts to pass onto people can be discovered to open up discussion concerning where society stands today.

After reading the works concerning gender in media and science fiction as well as theoretical works and works concerning method, I determined the themes needed in order to study women in contemporary science fiction television shows.

Many of the works discussed friendships with other women and romantic relationships with either men or women. Other works talked about women's toughness and physicality and if it subverted or reinforced gender roles, like in the works of Sherrie A. Inness. Humanity as a theme was discussed in terms of aliens and cyborgs and their attempt to exhibit gender roles as described by the society they are trying to imitate. Stereotypes, hegemony within society, and language were all discussed in the introduction and in the literature review as being important aspects of textual analysis since those three themes are performed in media but often times small gender differences

are more difficult to notice as compared to the theme of female friendships unless the researcher focuses on these themes. These themes and aspects will be applied to the television shows that are chosen for this analysis.

I wanted to look at the medium of television since much of the previous research discussed how it represents this idea of popular culture in a more systematic way since television shows are filmed in real time. Movies can be filmed years before they are even released in the theatre, while television shows are filmed within the same year in which they are aired. Another reason I chose television is that television has advertisements built into the viewing hour, postulating how the society affects the media is more accurate based upon the evidence that companies who pay for their advertisements to be shown affect what the channel shows in terms of their programming.

Women in science fiction television shows have been studied at length in past studies. But, there have been few opportunities to compare a past science fiction television show's portrayal of women to a more recent show. The show that I had chosen to study allowed just that. The qualifiers that are to follow justify my choice in show.

Since I had earlier established that the hard science fiction medium is more easily justifiable in deciding which shows to analyze, I only looked for shows from the United States that have strong elements of space travel, time travel, genetic engineering, and robots/cyborgs/androids. Those elements had to be a strong thread throughout the entire series and not just mentioned briefly. I wanted to look at more recent shows that have not been previously analyzed at length. So, shows from the 1990s and 2000's were eligible. However, I still needed to find a comparable show from a past decade (1960s, 1970s, and 1980s). I felt that the best way to run a comparison study is to find a show with spin-offs or remakes with several years between the spin-offs or remakes. There also had to be

a decent span of time between the past show and the current show, preferably 10-15 years. The show could not still be airing new episodes since acquiring copies of episodes may be more difficult since the episodes may not be available on DVD or another medium yet.

Only a few shows fit the first qualifiers:

- 1) *Battlestar Galactica* (1978-1979)/*Battlestar Galactica* (2003-2009)
- 2) *Star Trek* (1966-1969)/*Star Trek: Voyager* (1995-2001) or *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1993-1999) or *Star Trek: Enterprise* (2001-2005) [*Star Trek: The Next Generation* was omitted since it began in the 1980s and ended in the 1990s]
- 3) *Land of the Lost* (1974-1976)/*Land of the Lost* (1991-1992)
- 4) *The Invisible Man* (1975-1976)/*The Invisible Man* (2000-2002)
- 5) *V* (1984-1985)/*V* (2009-2011)

Most science fiction shows did not fit the first qualifiers, such as *Dr. Who* since it is a British television show, so it was not included.

In order to have a strong comparative sample, there needed to be enough episodes in both the past show and the recent show to make a strong comparison. *V* (1984-1985) only had 19 episodes while *V* (2009-2011) only had 22 episodes. *The Invisible Man* (1975-1976) only had 13 episodes while *The Invisible Man* (2000-2002) had 46 episodes. *Land of the Lost* (1974-1976) only had 43 episodes while *Land of the Lost* (1991-1992) had 26 episodes. *Battlestar Galactica* (1978-1979) had 24 episodes while *Battlestar Galactica* (2003-2009) had 75 episodes. I felt that *V* and *The Invisible Man* did not have enough episodes over enough time for a thorough comparison.

The *Star Trek* franchise has been studied at length over the years. Researchers have looked at everything from race relations to political implications to gender representation. Moreover, with several spin-offs to choose from, *Star Trek* is more complicated than what this study requires. So, I eliminated it as an option.

The next qualifier is whether or not the episodes can be acquired in order to watch them for analysis. Both of the *Battlestar Galactica* shows are readily available in their entirety on Netflix, an online streaming service. The episode list in the research will be the episodes listed on Netflix since it matches the DVD release of the series. *The Invisible Man*, *Land of the Lost*, and *V* are more difficult to find in their entirety. *Battlestar Galactica*, although it has been previously studied somewhat seems to be the best choice for this project. The previous studies done on this show have not used textual analysis of the entire show. A deeper understanding of the social implications of both the 1978 version and the 2003 version could be reached by using these methods. Another interesting aspect of these two shows is that the 2003 remake of the 1978 version has more women and in fact a few of the 1978 characters who were male have been changed to female characters in the 2003 version.

Since this study focused on a more in depth analysis of characters only those characters with an influential female part were studied. Influential female characters can be described as to have several lines within the episode and to play a major role in the plot of the show. A non-influential female character could be described as someone who is more in the background and has a few lines that only serve to move the scene along.

According to the cast listing for the 1978 version, the following female characters will be studied: Lieutenant Athena, Serina, Flight Corporal Rigel, Medtech Cassiopeia, Ensign Dietra, Ensign Brie, Aurora, Zara, and Lieutenant Sheba. According to the cast listing for the 2003 version, the following female characters will be studied: President Laura Roslin (originally a male character), Lt. Kara "Starbuck" Thrace (originally a male character), Number Six (a Cylon), Number Eight (a Cylon also known as Lt. Sharon "Boomer" Valerii and Sharon "Athena" Agathon), Petty Officer Anastasia Dualla,

Specialist Cally Henderson Tyrol, Ellen Tigh (a Cylon), Admiral Helena Cain (originally a male character), and Number Three (a Cylon posing as D'Anna Biers). Female guest stars may or may not be covered depending on if their role in the episode is as a main character or a secondary character. No children will be studied.

A coding sheet was used that lists the themes to be explored (See Figure One on page 96). Each female character had a coding sheet for every episode in which she appeared. When each episode was watched, a profile of the character was created. Each profile was detailed and discussed in relation to the themes.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Each show individually provided quite a bit of information for each category. The 1978 version of the show had interesting results, but not all that surprising. There are several female characters; however, the majority of them play very little role in the overall plot of the series. In fact, in each episode five, ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes would go by without a single woman being on screen. Many of the female characters, when onscreen, would have little to no lines and would just sit in the background. When a woman did have a part it mainly revolved around a romantic relationship or with taking orders from a male character.

The 2003 version of *Battlestar Galactica* has quite a few more female characters with more of a role in the plot development of the series, unlike its previous incarnation. However, not all of the characters represent an egalitarian view of female roles as well as a balancing of any stereotypes associated with gender. Each character had different moments within each theme studied that could be discussed, but some characters offer a more well-rounded discussion on one or two themes.

In each theme, one or more trends emerged after completing the character profiles. Each trend will be explained through examples from the episodes. It is also important to note that the theme of language/discourse will not be explored on its own.

The reason for this exclusion is that every example listed under that theme helped to better explain another theme, such as hegemonic gender roles.

TOUGHNESS/ PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In the 1978 version, all of the women have thin builds with styled hair and makeup. The only character whose makeup is not on the heavy side is Lt. Sheba. She does wear it, but only minimally. Most of the female characters wear a type of uniform with heeled boots. The women are occasionally shown in revealing dresses for certain occasions. Again, the only exception is Lt. Sheba whose uniform is closer to the uniform the men wear including a sidearm and flat bottomed boots. In episode four and five, some of the women, namely Serina, are on a mission and the pressure suits they wear are designed with black lines that draw attention to the breasts and public area. The men are wearing the same suit, but the lines do not have the same effect. Women are almost never shown doing anything physical.

In the 2003 version of the show, unlike the previous version, women are more likely to have an athletic build with minimal makeup and simple hair styles, particularly those female members of the military. The military women are commonly shown in their uniforms which exactly match the men's uniforms, especially the flat bottomed boots. A few women wear dresses, heavier makeup, styled hair, and have curvier figures, namely President Roslin, Ellen Tigh, Number Six, Caprica Six, and D'Anna Biers. But, even those women have moments of looking more natural. However, every female character at some point is shown in revealing clothing. Women are often shown fighting or doing something physical, such as boxing or exercising. Dualla, Starbuck, Boomer, and Athena are often shown lifting weights or boxing against fellow pilots. Cally often is shown doing physical labor while working in the hanger bay. Caprica Six can be seen fighting and using guns, but those actions are only shown in a small amount of episodes.

The newer version has two female characters that represent the new tough girl image that is popular in today's media: Admiral Cain and Starbuck. Admiral Cain is the commander of the Battlestar Pegasus and outranks Adama making her the military leader of the fleet. She had long straight hair and wears little to no makeup with a uniform and flat bottomed boots. Her countenance seems stern, and she always appears to stand at attention. She even sits in a more masculine way: leaning forward with her legs spread apart. Her character was a man in the original series. Admiral Cain exudes strength, but not emotional strength. She tells Starbuck that she avoids her conscience and accepts sin because she sees it as good leadership. Cain has been extremely masculinized. Her strength comes from her adoption of stereotypical masculine traits, such as aggression and stunted emotions.

In season one, the audience is presented with the new Starbuck. The Starbuck in the original series was a man, and not just any man, a ladies' man. The original Starbuck was the top Viper pilot. He was suave, blonde, and had many sexual conquests. He felt like women could not sleep around like he could. He smoked cigars, played cards, and drank to excess. The new Starbuck is played by a woman...a woman who looks and acts exactly like her male counterpart.

The audience first sees Starbuck running through the ship. She has extremely short blonde hair (cut similarly to the male version), an athletic body with toned biceps, wears little to no makeup, has several tattoos, and a uniform with flat bottomed boots. The next scene with her is when she is playing cards with the other pilots. She is smoking a cigar and drinking and gets in a fist fight with a superior officer and is thrown into the brig. Starbuck always has a snide retort to something and makes sexually based jokes ("Not a big enough dipstick for the job?" in the second part of the miniseries).

Starbuck often appears to be controlling her emotions except for aggression/anger. As the seasons progress, the audience sees her emoting more and more. One interesting symbol of Starbuck's emotions is her hair. Her hair grew throughout season three as they showed more of her emotions and less of the tough Viper pilot. Her hair seems to reflect her emotional/human state. When it is short she is in complete control of her depression and doubt. When her hair is longer she tends to cry more and to lose her identity. Starbuck is the ultimate tough girl. She fights and has an active sexual life. For example, in episode thirteen, Starbuck and Lee move around the ship to stop the political coup. She has a gun in each hand and shoots all mutineers that she sees ("Feels good to be alive."). In fact, she is so similar to her male counterpart, that at first one can hardly tell them apart. What makes Starbuck tough is being over masculinized to make her palatable to the audience.

Toughness in The Original Series is really only exhibited by Lt. Sheba and very rarely Cassiopeia. Lt. Sheba flies fighter planes, goes on dangerous missions, is shown fighting the enemy, and carries a gun. Cassiopeia is occasionally included on missions and stands up for herself. But, more often than not, women in The Original Series are passive. In the newer version, women are often shown in combat, fighting, and carrying weapons. Women are also shown working out and with defined muscles. The fighter pilots are a mixture of men and women as are the mechanics that do a lot of physical labor. The main examples of toughness in the newer version are Admiral Cain and Starbuck. They act masculine, look masculine, and exhibit other masculine traits which define toughness.

According to Inness (1999), the concept of toughness in women shows a change in gender identities. A woman can be represented as tough, but that toughness it

mitigated by traditional female roles and sexuality. For example, Starbuck fights, swears, wears masculine clothing and hairstyles, but she also is very sexualized and marries a man even though she is unfaithful and previously did not want to marry. She also is tricked into believing that she is a mother and takes on that role even though she had also previously stated that she did not want a child. Starbuck can only be tough, as defined by masculine toughness, if she has some feminine aspect or role. The same characterization can be applied to Lt. Sheba in the 1978 version. She fights, wears the male uniform style, and is included in important missions. However, she has to be shown as a daughter and a sexual object. She rejects Starbuck's advances, but admits love to Apollo. The tough women in both series must be feminized to make them acceptable to the audience.

FRIENDSHIPS AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

The character development of the 1978 female characters mainly revolved around their romantic relationships. Lt. Athena's main function is her relationship with the fighter pilot Starbuck. In the first episode, we see an interaction where she is naked and he is begging her to continue the relationship. She wants to move on, but in the very next episode, she is jealous of Starbuck and Cassiopeia. She constantly vies for Starbuck's attentions, and he uses her throughout the series. In episode seven, Starbuck double books himself and has to run back and forth between Athena and Cassiopeia. The manager of the restaurant applauds Starbuck's ability to have multiple women. Just like Athena, Cassiopeia's main function is her relationship with Starbuck. By the third episode, she has claimed Starbuck as hers, but he continues to have multiple sexual relationships with various women throughout the series. However, Starbuck seems to prefer her over other women. In episode twelve, Starbuck gets jealous of Admiral Cain, one of Cassiopeia's former clients. He can sleep around, but she cannot.

Serina's main function is her romance with Apollo, Adama's son. By episode two, they are already a couple and are married by episode five. Aurora appears in one episode and is a former lover of Starbuck's. Lt. Sheba was the exception. Romantically, she spurns Starbuck's advances multiple times and reveals her feelings for Apollo only in episode twenty-four (the last episode of the series). No real friendships are shown in the 1978 version.

The 2003 version does contain female characters whose main function is their romantic relationships. Dualla's main role revolves around her romantic relationship to Lee 'Apollo' Adama, Admiral Adama's son. The rare times she gets camera time concern

Lee Adama. In season two, Lee begins teaching her how to fight and some sexual tension is implied. In episode fourteen, she asks him if they are going somewhere in their relationship and he replies in the negative. She immediately goes out with her other love interest, Billy. But, by episode sixteen, she rejects Billy's marriage proposal and within the same day is on a date with Lee. Billy dies trying to protect her in that episode. The very next episode she is in a sexual relationship with Lee, and one year later they are married. In season three episode thirteen, she accuses him of cheating on her with Kara 'Starbuck' Thrace even though she saw it coming, but married him anyway because she loved him "as long as you [Lee] and Kara would let" her. By the end of that season she has left him.

The character Specialist Cally Henderson Tyrol shares some similarities with Dualla. She also appears in many episodes and has little to no lines or part within the episode. Another similarity is that her main function revolves around her romantic relationship with Chief Specialist Galen Tyrol. In season one, when she does have a part in an episode, she usually is being scolded by Tyrol or helping him with different tasks. In season two, in the last episode on New Caprica, they are married with a child on the way. Cally's entire contribution to season three is as Tyrol's wife and the mother of a son. She is either fighting with Tyrol over not spending time enough with the baby or helping him with his various rebel causes by obeying his orders. In season four, she only appears in episode three. That episode begins with her fighting with Tyrol and accusing him of cheating. Cally remains just a device to move along Tyrol's story. Without her, he could not have managed his rebel causes. Her story is so intertwined in his that even after her death he talks about her and even complains about her. She has no real identity but as Tyrol's wife.

Athena is first introduced to the audience in season one when she shows up on Caprica to help abandoned pilot Karl 'Helo' Agathon. Helo had been Boomer's flight partner, and he is under the impression that she has come back to rescue him from the Cylon occupied Caprica. Throughout this season, they are constantly on the run from Cylon centurions, a more traditional robot. They often have to rescue each other. However, Athena is meeting with other Cylons to discuss her progress with him. It is not until she has sex with Helo that the audience knows that her whole purpose is to try and get Helo to fall in love with her so that they can create a Cylon-human hybrid child. At the beginning of season two, she helps Helo and Starbuck escape Caprica and gets them back to the fleet. In episode seven, Helo professes his love for Athena. In episode nine, Athena tells Helo "you are the father of my child, first in my heart, and nothing's ever going to change that." Episode eighteen includes Athena giving birth to a daughter that they name Hera. The baby is born sickly, but Athena is still happy and says to Helo, "I love you so completely." Season three begins a year after the colonists have mostly moved to New Caprica. Athena is living on Battlestar Galactica with her husband Helo. Her role then turns more toward being a mother, but her role as a wife remains vital to her character.

Number Six's main function revolves around her relationship with Dr. Gaius Baltar. She meets him on Caprica before the Cylon attack and asks his help to break into the defense mainframe. He agrees and they begin a sexual relationship. Throughout the series, the audience is shown many sexual encounters between these two characters. After the Cylon nuclear attack on Caprica, Baltar begins to hallucinate her. She tells him that she put a chip in his head so he can see her and no one else can. Her main role at this point appears to be some kind of inner voice or conscience to Baltar. He tells her that he

loves her as she loves him. In episode one, she tells Baltar, “You’ve got me. I’m here for you.” She had never left him.

Caprica Six has the same beginning as Number Six. She was the one on Caprica with Baltar during the attacks. But in season three episode eighteen, she is resurrected on the Cylon ship with all of her memories of her time with Baltar downloaded into her new subconscious. Caprica Six begins seeing an imaginary Baltar. When she decides to do something good and try to make peace with the humans, her imaginary Baltar tells her, “I have never loved anyone more in my life more than I love you now.” In season three, she is on New Caprica as a part of the Cylon Occupation. She and the real Baltar have rekindled their sexual relationship, but they seem to not be connecting on any other level. After the humans escape from New Caprica, she takes Baltar on board a Cylon Basestar while they decide what to do with him. She does not want to love him anymore by episode five, but by episode ten she is in a sexual relationship with D’Anna and Baltar, but they leave her in episode eleven. By the end of the season, while both she and Baltar are on the Battlestar Galactica, Baltar has won her affection and loyalty again by making promises and apologies for his previous actions.

While being held in the brig in season four, Colonel Tigh begins to fantasize about Caprica Six when she asks him what he needs from her. They eventually begin a sexual relationship and conceive a baby, the first fully Cylon child by episode eight. They discuss baby preparations and appear to be very happy. Sadly, in episode sixteen, she loses the baby. Tigh still cares about her, but he seems to have gone back to his wife Ellen. In episode eighteen, Caprica Six goes to see Baltar. He tries to seduce her, but she rejects him because she has grown as a person. In the last episodes of season four, Baltar sticks by her while she shoots Cylons and centurions during the Hera rescue mission.

They kiss during the mission and together they rescue Hera. When the fleet reaches new Earth, they go off together to live the rest of their lives.

In the newer version, there are two women who struggle with intimacy and commitment, which are stereotypical traits often ascribed to women. President Laura Roslin often confides in others, but rarely exhibits romantic behavior for the first three seasons. Season two is when the audience begins to see a romantic relationship developing between her and Admiral Adama. Adama tells his son Lee in episode twelve, “She’s made of sterner stuff than people give her credit for.” In the same episode, Roslin kisses Adama on the lips and romantic music plays, but no other obvious instances of romance between them occurs in the season. In season three, the audience begins to see her becoming closer to Adama. She supports him while he boxes and even offers punching tips and they reminisce about the happy times on New Caprica (the cabin they wanted to build). They are very honest with each other when it comes to different issues that arise in the season.

Season four shows Laura staying in Adama’s quarters since she has to go to her daily treatment aboard the Battlestar Galactica. Adama often reads to her while she is going through the treatments. In episode nine, Roslin has a vision of her dead priestess friend, Elosha. The priestess shows her dead in a hospital bed with Adama, Lee, and Kara crying around her. Elosha says, “You don’t love people anymore.” Roslin is acting like just a president and not a person. At the end of the episode, when she is reunited with Adama and she says, “I love you.” He responds, “About time,” and they kiss. In episode eleven, the fleet finds that Earth has been devastated by nuclear war. Roslin loses all hope and shut down emotionally. She refuses to do her job and president and lays on the ground in the fetal position. Adama begs her to take control again in episode twelve, and

she refuses but they have sex by the end of the episode. When the fleet finds the new Earth, she and Adama go flying around it to look at the wildlife. She is noticeably ill. She dies during their tour, and Adama cries and gives her his wedding band. He buries her and begins building the cabin they always wanted. It took her most of the series to begin to trust others and to allow herself to fall in love, but once she does, she seems happier and regains her humanity.

Starbuck appears to be close to Lee 'Apollo' Adama like in the original series. She had been engaged to Zak, Adama's youngest son and Lee's brother who died in a training accident. However, there is some sexual tension between Lee and Starbuck in season one. Adama later asks her to train new pilots as she used to do on Caprica. Zak, her fiancé, had died in a training accident since she passed him when she should not have, so training these new pilots causes her to flashback to Zak. Most of her flashbacks revolve around his funeral and them making love. By the end of season one, the audience sees Baltar flirting with her. In episode thirteen, they dance at a party, and by the next episode opens with Baltar and Starbuck having sex, but she calls him "Lee" causing her to leave abruptly. Apollo finds out and becomes angry indicating jealousy.

In season two, the audience sees Starbuck on Caprica where she is reunited with her friend Helo. Helo and Starbuck meet with a group of survivors, including Samuel Anders, a Triad player (a popular colonial sport). In episode five, she has sex with Anders before going on a mission. During the mission, she is injured and wakes up in a hospital. The doctor tells her that Anders died trying to save her. She cries at the news. At the end of the episode, she realizes that the doctor is a Cylon and kills him in order to escape. Anders, Athena, and Helo arrive to save her. Starbuck, Helo, and Athena leave Caprica, but Starbuck promises Anders that she will return to rescue the survivors. Once they find

the fleet, she is welcomed back by Lee and their sexual tension continues. In episode fifteen, she keeps thinking about Anders and initiates a sexual encounter with Lee while thinking about Anders. Lee thinks she is rushing the moment, and she says all she wanted was “a good lay” and that there is nothing there. In episode nineteen, she leads the mission to rescue the survivors on Caprica. Once back on the Battlestar Galactica, she kisses and holds Anders in front of Lee, who is very jealous of the couple. One year later on New Caprica, she is married to Anders.

After the exodus from New Caprica and the Cylon Occupation, Starbuck tries to fill her role as a pilot, but the horrors of the occupation have caused her to become bitter and cruel. She wants to blame someone and to have revenge. In episode five, she tells Anders she does not want him anymore, and begins to push others away. In episode nine, she has sex with Anders and he begs her to come back to him. She refuses saying he is not what she wants. During the annual boxing matches, she watches Lee box and remembers having sex with him on New Caprica. They had proclaimed their love and agreed to leave their partners. But, the next morning she had snuck away and married Anders. Lee has never forgiven her. The end of the episode has Lee and Starbuck boxing violently. No one wins, but they forgive each other for the pain they caused. But, in the next episode it is apparent that they are cheating on their spouses.

In episode eleven, Lee asks her to divorce Anders and he will leave Dualla. She refuses saying that marriage is a sacrament and cheating is “just breaking the rules.” In the next episode, she is injured in a crash. Lee orders Dualla to rescue Starbuck. Dualla says, “My husband ordered me to risk my life to rescue you. I’m gonna bring Starbuck back to Apollo.” Once back on the Battlestar Galactica, she talks with Anders. She will not divorce him and she may love Lee, but she calls herself his “estranged two-timing

bitch of a wife.” In episode seventeen, Starbuck is experiencing depression. Helo expresses concern for her and suggests she talk to someone. She refuses. Earlier she has slept with Anders and opened up to him about her physically and emotionally abusive mother.

In episode two of season four, Adama gives her a ship and small crew to find Earth. Anders, Helo, and Athena go with her. On the ship, Anders has to constantly defend her erratic behavior to the others, but she pushes him away (“I only married you because it was easy, Sam.”). Yet, Starbuck uses him for sex (“I don’t want to fight, Sam. I want to frak [fuck].”). In episode thirteen, Anders is severely injured during the mutiny, and she helps get him to sick bay. He had a bullet in his brain, and she stays by him while they operate. She apologizes for everything she has done to him. In episode twenty-one, she has to say goodbye to Anders. She says, “I love you.” He responds, “I’ll see you on the other side.”

Starbuck constantly goes back and forth in her relationships with Anders and Lee. She has a fickle nature and is very sexual. She has trouble trusting others, but ultimately realizes which relationship is the healthiest for her.

In the newer version, sexuality is shown and explored by many of the female characters. Many of the sexual encounters are between unmarried couples. The series often shows Starbuck acting out sexual intercourse with several male characters: Zak, Lee, Anders, and Baltar. Number Six constantly touches and seduces Baltar. They are often shown having sex in graphic detail and for several minutes of episode time. She is seen naked in several episodes as well. Caprica Six and D’Anna are even shown in an encounter together with Baltar in episode ten of season three. Ellen has sexual intercourse with Number One in the first few episodes of season three. The original series implied

sexual encounters, but the newer one not only shows these moments, but uses them as major plot devices.

Romantic relationship is the most common theme in both versions of *Battlestar Galactica*. The overwhelming majority of the relationships are heterosexual with the exception of Admiral Cain (her relationship is not shown within the series, but in a mini movie). Women in both series are used mainly to complement a fellow male character. Athena and Cassiopeia from The Original Series have Starbuck while Serina has Apollo. In the newer version, Dualla has Lee, Cally has Tyrol, Ellen has Colonel Tigh, Caprica Six and Number Six have Gaius Baltar, Boomer has Tyrol and Number One, Athena has Helo, President Roslin has Admiral Adama, and Starbuck has Lee and Anders. Few women are shown not in some type of romantic relationship, such as Sheba and Admiral Cain. Oftentimes, those romantic relationships define the character or dominate her overall role in the show. Many times when the couples are shown together, the women are doing stereotypical female duties, such as cooking or taking care of children. The women nag their partners and manipulate them by using sex and other methods.

In both versions the power relationships, as detailed by Holz, Gibson, and Ivory (2009), are skewed. The men definitely hold more of the power. In the 1978 version, Apollo gives Serina orders to quit being a pilot. She talks back to him and appears to win the argument, but ultimately he and Starbuck are able to keep her close to them as a means of protecting her. Starbuck often tells Athena and Cassiopeia what to do, and they obey even if they disagree. In the 2003 version, Athena tells Helo that he is the strong one in their marriage even though she is a Cylon and capable of going on missions alone. Caprica Six and D'Anna often defer to Baltar in certain matters. Boomer relies on Tyrol

to help her when she has problems. Starbuck, Number Six, and Laura all tend to defy men and do as they please, but they are often scolded for doing so.

Friendships in The Original Series are rarely explored. Some of the women attend events together or listen to the other female characters' problems, but little time is given to the bonding in the show. In the newer version, friendships are explored a little more. Dualla babysits for Helo and Athena. Starbuck often confides in Helo. Adama often confides in Athena. In season three episode two, she asks Adama, "How do you now you can trust me?" and he responds, "I don't. That's what trust is." Caprica Six helps Athena escape a Cylon Basestar with Hera. Characters tend to help each other and attempt to trust each other. The pilots often stick together and stand up for each other. Other crew members do the same. They often play games together and joke around in their quarters. Sometimes friends offer advice or voice concern. There is no restriction on whether or not friendships are coed. Oftentimes, characters are friends with both men and women. Moreover, any coed relationships are not implied to be sexual. For example, Helo is very close to Starbuck, but there is never any sexual tension. Friendships keep the Fleet bonded together during this difficult time.

Sharon Ross (2004) discusses how important female friendships are as a way of resisting the patriarchal pressures of society. However, female friendships are not explored much in either versions of this show. In the 1978 version, little female interaction is shown. There are many instances of male bonding, namely between the pilots, but women are often not shown together or they are vying for the same man's affections. In the 2003 version, women are friends, but they are more often shown bonding with other men. Helo and Starbuck are close as are Athena and Adama. Just as in the original version, women are more typically shown vying for the same man's

affections. The moments women do bond are memorable because they rarely happen in the series.

ROLES WITHIN THE SHOW AND CAREERS

In the 1978 version, women often have jobs but most are stereotypical and have no real impact on the plot of the show. Lt. Athena is Commander Adama's daughter and a communications officer on the bridge who occasionally flies shuttles or fighter planes (Vipers). Cassiopeia is a former socialator (a geisha) and current Medtech (nurse). Serina was a news reporter on the planet Caprica before the Cylon attack. Later in the show she becomes a pilot when there is a pilot shortage due to an illness. She is also a single mother to a son. Lt. Sheba arguably could be called the most androgynous of the female characters in the 1978 version of *Battlestar Galactica*. Her father is the war hero Admiral Cain, commander of the *Battlestar Pegasus*, and she is their top fighter pilot. Her role is one of a trusted warrior, and is included in important briefings and missions. Flight Corporal Rigel, Ensign Dietra, Ensign Brie, Aurora, and Zara rarely have a part in the show. Rigel and Zara have few lines and no major role but appear in several episodes as background characters. Rigel is simply an officer on the bridge who relays information to pilots. Zara is a news reporter. Aurora appears in one episode and is a former lover of Starbuck's. Dietra and Brie become fighter pilots during the pilot shortage which could imply that women did not have that career option until almost all of the male pilots are deathly ill. Dietra is given control of the squadron during one important mission, but then is rarely seen in the rest of the series.

Overall, in the original version, women are glorified secretaries, nurses, and occasional schoolteachers for the children of the Fleet. Sheba's role as a Viper pilot goes against the role norm of the rest of the characters. Although the audience does see Dietra, Brie, and Serina flying Viper planes against the Cylons, but that happens only when there

are not enough men to fly the planes. Few of the women affect the plot of episodes and the show.

In the newer version, women's jobs and roles are more egalitarian, or equal to that of the role of men. However, some women's role within the show is not as important or egalitarian. Dualla is a communications officer on their bridge where her main purpose is to relay information to Admiral Adama and to the Viper pilots. Many of the episodes that include her in the cast listing only utilize her as a background character. Dualla only has a role when it comes to adding more complication to Lee and Kara's odd relationship. She stays in the background except when Lee is involved. She is constantly emotional and never seems to handle stressful situations well. The character Cally is a type of mechanic on the ship and follows Tyrol's orders. She mainly exists to be Tyrol's wife and a mother to their son. Ellen Tigh was the creator of the other eight models and came from the original Earth to warn humans about creating artificial intelligence. At the end of season four, she takes a place in the background except with providing Cylon information or having discussions with Saul over their true nature. Ultimately, she wants to end the cycle of violence between humans and machines, but she has not direct influence on the situation.

In season two, D'Anna Biers appears in episode eight as a news reporter in the colonial fleet. She is asked by Admiral Adama and President Roslin to put a human face on the military. She has unlimited access to Battlestar Galactica and its crew. At the end of the episode it is revealed that she is a Cylon, and that everything she filmed is being given to the Cylons.

In season three, D'Anna begins the season as a leading Cylon during the occupation of New Caprica. She begins to have visions of the Final Five Cylon models,

and thinks she is the chosen one blessed by the One True God. In season four, she sides with the humans to help find Earth and to destroy the Cylon capability of resurrection. In episode eleven, they find Earth devastated by nuclear war, and D'Anna chooses to stay there.

Boomer is the first incarnation of the Number Eight model introduced to the viewers. Her role on the Battlestar Galactica is as a Raptor (a shuttle) pilot. It is revealed early on that she is a Cylon sleeper agent (unaware of her Cylon nature). Boomer, along with Caprica Six, begins a campaign to convince the other Cylons to make a peace with the humans in season three. They are the two Cylons responsible for the occupation of New Caprica. In season four episode fifteen, she helps Ellen escape the Basestar, but ultimately it turns out that this escape was just a ruse for Boomer to kidnap Hera for Number One.

Athena is the second incarnation of the Number Eight model, but her overall role within the show is distinctly different. She embodies the continuing argument in the show on what makes someone a human. At first, her purpose revolves around conceiving a child with Helo, since Cylons can only create a child when in love. At the beginning of season two, she helps Helo and Starbuck escape Caprica and gets them back to the fleet. Once back on the Battlestar Galactica, Athena helps with several missions to prove her worth, but characters do not trust her since she is a Cylon. By season three and continuing into season four, her main role has turned to being sent on important and risky missions for the ship. However, one could argue that major purpose for choosing her for these missions is because she is a Cylon and not a human.

Number Six only appears to be some kind of figment of Baltar's imagination. Her role as this figment appears to be some kind of inner voice or conscience to Baltar.

Number Six often tells Baltar what to do whether it is stealing Hera from Helo and Athena or what to say to others to keep him out of trouble. She protects Baltar and directs him on his destiny. Overall, Number Six can be described as the show's Busty Vixen, a female character to be an object of sexual desire that can have another purpose. Caprica Six has the same beginning as Number Six. She was the one on Caprica with Baltar during the attacks. She is revered by the other Cylons for her part in the attack on the Twelve Colonies. But, Caprica Six struggles with her destiny, and later believes that she is supposed to protect Hera (Helo and Athena's daughter) with her life.

Admiral Helena Cain holds a very high position as the commander of the Battlestar Pegasus and as the military leader of the colonial fleet since she outranks Adama. Like Cain, President Roslin holds a very high position as the civilian leader of the colonial fleet. In the first episode of season one, she is the Secretary of Education under President Adar, who is her secret lover. After her doctor's appointment she attends the decommissioning of the Battlestar Galactica. It is during this ceremony that the destruction of the Twelve Colonies takes place. All of the other elected officials are killed, so she is sworn in as the new president of the surviving humans. She immediately begins trying to maintain order by creating a convoy. Later in season one, a priestess tells her she may be the Dying Leader from an ancient prophecy. It is said this leader will show the humans the path to Earth. Roslin becomes obsessed with this idea, especially with finding the Arrow of Apollo and the Tomb of Athena which will show the way to Earth. But, as president she still deals with major issues that plague the fleet, such as the black market and limited supplies.

In season three, the audience sees Roslin as a schoolteacher on New Caprica since Baltar defeated her in the presidential election. She is somewhat involved in the

insurgency to overthrow the Cylon regime on the planet, and helps lead the exodus off of the planet. By episode five, Tom Zarek, Baltar's vice president, has given the presidency back to Roslin. Once she is back as president, she begins to help the fleet heal from the horrors of New Caprica. The audience sees Roslin as both a good balancing force for the fleet and as a controlling tyrant of different political situations that arise.

Starbuck's main role in season one revolves around her job as a Viper pilot. She often goes on dangerous missions since she is the best pilot in the fleet. Adama later asks her to train new pilots as she used to do on Caprica. Adama also entrusts her with the interrogation of a Cylon. At the end of season one, Starbuck decides to do as Roslin asked her and steal the Cylon raider and go after the Arrow of Apollo on Caprica which constitutes mutiny against Adama. She is forgiven for her actions, and again is trusted with dangerous and important missions, such as rescuing the survivors on Caprica. Season four finds Starbuck in charge of a search for Earth. She manages to find the coordinates to Earth, and the fleet finds only a world devastated by nuclear war. In the end of the season, she is trying to decode the mysterious song she keeps hearing as well as the Final Five Cylons because she believes it will lead them to a new home. She also helps with the Hera rescue mission since Hera gave her the clue to decoding the song. She manages to find a new Earth.

Women in the 2003 version not only act as wives and mothers, but they have important jobs within the fleet and have a part in moving the plot along the four seasons of the show. There are occasions when women are just background characters or do not have much of a part in the episode. But, women hold some of the highest positions, such as the president, an admiral, and top Viper pilot.

According to Holz, Gibson, and Ivory (2009), women in television are often defined by their marital role, and that the percentage of women working outside the home had not changed over three decades. But, women's careers had become less stereotyped in more recent years. Zemach and Cohen (1986) discuss how women's careers on television are traditionally female, such as nurses, actresses, secretaries, and teachers. In the 1978 version, Athena and Rigel are basically secretaries on the bridge of the ship. Serina and Zara start out as news reporters (a type of actress in this case). Cassiopeia is a nurse. There are female fighters pilots, but are only shown in a couple of episodes with the exception of Lt. Sheba. In the 2003 version, women's careers are less feminine. Athena and Boomer are pilots. Starbuck is a fighter pilot, but she does act as a flight instructor (teacher). Laura is the president, but she was originally the Secretary of Education and a schoolteacher before that. Admiral Cain is the leader of the military. Dualla is a communications officer, which is basically a secretary. Cally is a mechanic, typically a male career. Women's careers and roles have become less stereotyped, but there are still those who fit the stereotype.

HUMANITY

In the 1978 version, there are no instances of humanity recorded for the characters. No discussions about humanity take place. This fact could be attributed to that Cylons are only robots while, in the newer version, Cylons can also look human.

In the newer version, the concept of humanity gets discussed by many if not all of the female characters at some point in the series. The debate over Cylon nature as well as human nature is a common theme as well as how death and religion are represented. Cally discovers that her husband Tyrol is a Cylon (one of the Final Five), and takes their son to the airlock to commit suicide since she is afraid of Cylons and does not know how to handle this information. Tory, another Cylon, stops Cally from committing suicide only to take the son, and kills Cally by opening the airlock. At the end of season four, Ellen Tigh awakes in a resurrection chamber on the main Cylon ship. Apparently she is the final Cylon model to be revealed (her husband Saul was also one). Number One had the five original Cylons' memories wiped so they could go experience how horrible humanity is since he is angry that the creators made the eight models to be like humans. In episode fifteen, Number One and Ellen argue over her programming. She says that she gave the Cylons the gift of free will, compassion, and love. But, she will not give him the gift of resurrection again. He responds, "Your children are dying, Ellen, and you won't lift a finger to save us."

In season three, D'Anna Biers starts having prophetic dreams about finding the half human/half Cylon baby, Hera. An oracle reveals to her that she has an important destiny. In episode eight, Baltar discovers that D'Anna is killing herself over and over to experience death and resurrection ("This is something beautiful: the miraculous between

life and death.”). D’Anna helps destroy the Cylon capability of resurrection making the playing field even with humans (“Permanent death. Well, that makes this all the more meaningful.”). D’Anna as a character is special in that she has doubts about her faith but they are reaffirmed when she experiences miracles. She wants to experience death, and to unite the Cylons so life can be meaningful.

Boomer does not know at first that she is a Cylon. When she starts to suspect that something is wrong, she fights against instincts to harm humans, namely by the use of bombs. At the end of season one, she gives in to her Cylon nature and shoots Admiral Adama. At the beginning of season two, she is being interrogated by Colonel Tigh who calls her “a thing.” During her transport to prison, Cally shoots Boomer who dies from her wounds. In season two, she resurrects on the Cylon resurrection ship. She has trouble accepting her Cylon nature, but Caprica Six helps her to assimilate. In season four, Boomer provides the audience with an example of the Cylon psyche by sharing her projection with Tyrol. Projection is the Cylon capability to imagine themselves in any location they desire, but they actually see and experience the location. In episode twenty, Boomer sneaks Hera away from Number One and gives her back to Athena to redeem herself, but Athena kills her.

When the audience is introduced to Athena, Boomer’s Cylon nature has already been revealed, so the audience knows that Athena is also a Cylon. In season one, Athena is supposed to conceive a child with Helo. The Cylons have a theory that a child can only be created when the two parents are in love, so they create the situation to trick Helo into loving Athena. Helo does see another Number Eight, and figures out what Athena really is. The only reason he does not kill her is because she reveals that she is pregnant, complete with morning sickness. She tries to explain to him that she has emotions and

fears (“I do get cold you know.”). Once back on the Battlestar Galactica in season two, Athena’s pregnancy progresses. It is obvious that she believes that she feels love for Helo and her baby. But, President Roslin says, “She thinks she’s in love.” The humans do not believe that a Cylon can love or feel any emotion (Moore 2008: 105). In the very next episode, some men from the Battlestar Pegasus attempt to rape Athena. She is rescued by Helo and Tyrol, but the other men do not know why it was wrong to rape her since she is not a person. Dr. Cottle seems to be one of the few men who actually stands up for her when he says, “What happened to her is unforgiveable.” Episode eighteen includes Athena giving birth to a daughter that they name Hera. By the end of the episode, the baby is dead, and Athena sobs and accuses everyone of killing her baby. The end of the season has her back in the brig. Adama asks her why the Cylons attacked the colonies. She responds that humanity is flawed by petty jealousy, greed, and murder and they do not deserve to survive.

In season three, Athena is now trusted by Adama and is married to Helo. In episode fourteen, she and Helo argue about her not being human and how it affects him. But, Athena claims that she has to prove she is a person every day. In season four, she keeps having the same dream that she is chasing her daughter Hera with President Roslin through on Opera House, and a Number Six and Baltar take the girl. At the end of the season, another Number Eight tells Athena that they admire her since she showed them that they can go beyond their programming. Athena remains a complex example of what makes a being a human. She is a mother and wife, often a friend to those on the ship. She saves the lives of humans constantly yet she is still viewed as just a thing. Never really fitting in with the others, her identity revolves around her maternal role.

Number Six is revealed as a Cylon in season one and it is also revealed that she had tricked Baltar so the Cylons could destroy humanity. However, she warns Baltar about the attack and protects him from a nuclear blast. When she shows up as an imaginary figure to Baltar, the One True God comprises much of her conversations with Baltar since he is an atheist in an attempt to convert him to the Cylon faith. In season two episode seven, she talks about how depraved humans are, including Baltar (“Wake up and smell the psychosis.” in an effort to convince him that she is really just his crazed imagination). In season four, she sees the opportunity to begin converting humans to the One True God. She warns Baltar that the old gods die hard and are fighting back and he needs to stay strong for the cause. In episode twenty one it is revealed that she was an otherworldly being sent to guide Baltar.

Caprica Six was the Six on Caprica with Baltar when the attack happened and is later resurrected on a Cylon ship in season two. She lives on Caprica with the other Cylons. She does not know who or what she is. Samuel Anders, a human survivor, asks her “What kind of people are you?” She answers, “I don’t know.” In season three, Caprica Six has many conversations with Baltar while he is being held prisoner on the Cylon Basestar. During their discussions, Baltar tells her how to be human: “There’s a trick to being human. You can only think about yourself.” He also calls her “a real person” and “a woman.” Once on the Battlestar Galactica, she begins to share the same Opera House dream with Laura Roslin and Athena. Season four finds Caprica Six still in the brig providing information on the Cylons. Colonel Tigh continues to visit her and asks her how it feels to have killed millions of humans. She replies that Cylons and humans are the same and shows her veins to prove that they are the same. She becomes

pregnant with Tigh's child, but loses the baby. Caprica Six grows and develops as a being, which could be described as a human trait.

Admiral Cain could be categorized as a biological human but with questionable human morals. In season two, Colonel Tigh finds out that she shot her former first mate in the head in front of the whole crew when he refused an order. It is apparent that she has great control or even a detachment from her emotions. In episode eleven, she calls Adama and Roslin's attempt to compromise weak. In the same episode, her men try to rape Athena, an act which she condones since Athena is a Cylon, and she has Helo and Tyrol arrested for attacking her men. It is also revealed that she had civilian ships stripped and had families killed if people did not comply. At the end of episode twelve, both Cain and Adama abandon their assassination plans and all seems well. At the end of the episode Gina, a formerly imprisoned and raped Number Six, kills Cain, and the audience does not know that they had been lovers before Gina's true nature was revealed.

The first episode of season one reveals that Laura Roslin has terminal breast cancer. She barely has the time to absorb this information when the attack on the colonies occurs, and she is named president. She immediately has to make difficult decisions. For example, she has to make the choice to leave several civilian ships behind because they cannot travel fast enough which would cause their death. She makes the decision to leave them, but agonizes over it. During season one, Roslin begins cancer treatment as well as taking an unproven herb which is causing her to hallucinate. Those hallucinations fit the Dying Leader prophecy. In season two, her cancer is cured by Athena's Cylon-human fetal blood. The audience often sees her praying to the gods for guidance while she is making difficult political decisions.

In season three, Roslin argues that Cylons are not people so humans can destroy the whole race. She authorizes biological weapons to cause Cylon extinction. By the end of the season, her cancer has returned. In season four, the audience sees Roslin weakening physically. Her hair has fallen out due to her intensive cancer treatments, so she is wearing a wig. Roslin has also begun to lose her faith as well as becoming very emotional over her cancer. She has pushed everyone away and treats everyone cruelly. In episode nine, after having the vision of Elosha, she tries to kill Baltar when he admits his guilt over his role in the destruction of the colonies, but when she realizes what she is doing, she cries and manages to save him. She has seen what she has become and wants to change. After finding Earth devastated by nuclear war in episode eleven, Roslin has thrown out her medication and has decided to let her cancer take its course because she wants to enjoy what life she has left. The remainder of the season has her becoming weaker and weaker. She dies by the end of the season. Throughout the series, she does not see the Cylons as people, but her opinion seems to change or at least softens in the latter seasons.

Starbuck has many facets. She often seems detached from her emotions like her male counterpart in the 1978 version. One difference between the male and female version of Starbuck is that she is quite religious and often prays to the gods, even for the souls of Cylons. In season three, during the Cylon Occupation of New Caprica, she is being held captive by the Cylon named Leoben. One day, Leoben comes home with a little girl claiming it to be Starbuck's daughter with him, born by a surrogate. Starbuck does not believe him and calls the girl "a thing." When left alone with the child Kacey, the girl falls down the stairs and almost dies. Starbuck cries and sits by the girl's bedside

and prays. She begins to treat the girl as her daughter. The daughter turns out to be a Cylon trick.

After the exodus from New Caprica, Starbuck and Colonel Tigh begin to spread hate filled emotions among the crew in episode six. Adama shoves her to the ground and calls her “a malcontent” and “a cancer.” He also tells Starbuck that if she cannot become a human again then she will have to leave the Battlestar Galactica. Starbuck changes her attitude. In episode seventeen, she begins to hallucinate a Cylon raider, and during the hallucination she sees Leoben. Leoben shows her the last time she saw her mother. Her mother was dying of cancer, but degrades her daughter calling her a failure and other cruel names. Leoben, really an otherworldly being, gives Starbuck the opportunity to heal things with her mother. It is then that Starbuck decides it is time to die, and commits suicide by allowing her plane to crash. Lee had tried to stop her. In episode twenty, during a dangerous mission, she appears in a brand new Viper.

The beginning of season four has her in the new Viper plane with longer hair. She helps Lee during the mission and goes back to the Battlestar Galactica. Lee hugs her, but the rest of the crew thinks she is a Cylon. Starbuck had been gone for two months, but she thinks it was six hours and claims that she knows the way to Earth. No one believes her. She screams and cries, and seems to have a physically painful reaction as the fleet moves farther and farther away from Earth. When her secret mission to find Earth fails at first, the ship meets back with the fleet, and Starbuck is allowed to meet with the Cylon Hybrid, who seems to know all. The Hybrid calls her “the harbinger of death” and that she will lead them all to their end. When the crew actually does find Earth and it has been devastated by war, she and Leoben find the remains of a cockpit. Inside the cockpit, they find a decayed corpse. The corpse has Starbuck’s dog tags, and Leoben admits that he

does not know what she is. She tells him what the Hybrid called her, and he leaves Starbuck. She screams after him, “What am I?!” No one knows who or what she is anymore.

In episode seventeen of season four Starbuck appears to be in a boring daily repetition. She spends a lot of time in the bar, and while there she helps a pianist compose a song. She confides her secrets to him, and together they compose a song. This song is the one that helped the Final Five realize what they were. She does not know how she would have known that. In episode eighteen, she and Baltar have a discussion about angels and whether or not she is dead. She says, “There is one thing I know for sure: I’m no angel.” In the final episode on the new Earth, she remembers something Leoben called her, “an angel blazing with the light of God.” She says goodbye to Adama and Roslin. When she talks to Lee and asks what he is going to do now, she disappears. He says, “Goodbye, Kara. You won’t be forgotten.”

Starbuck turns out to be an otherworldly being sent to help humanity find its new home allowing them to start over as a species. She struggles with her identity, and often defends the Cylons and prays for them.

The argument whether or not Cylons who look human can be considered human takes place in many episodes. Athena constantly has to prove that she is a person, but she is often sent on dangerous missions because Adama does not want to send a ‘real’ human. She even fights with Helo about how her Cylon nature affects him. Defining what makes someone human is a topic philosophers have discussed for centuries. For example, Robert W. Moore (2008) compares Athena to Kierkegaard’s theory of individuality. Since Athena as well as D’Anna, Boomer, and Caprica Six do not conform to the collective as the rest of the Cylons do, they fit the definition of the individual. The individual is highly

valued by humanity thus making these Cylons more in line with their definition of humanity (Moore 2008). The Cylons have emotions, feel sensations, and can have biological children. However, they are not considered to be real. In season four episode nineteen, Tyrol (a Cylon) calls Cylon women just “blow-up dolls [dolls meant for sexual gratification]”.

According to Lorber (2003), cultural meanings, social relationships, and power politics are what create human nature instead of biology (104). In the 2003 version of *Battlestar Galactica*, what makes a being human is often discussed. Many of the humans believe that Cylons are not human, even though the Cylons have emotions, sensations, are made of biological materials, dream, and can conceive children. Cylons have a religion, social relationships, and politics. The definition of human is never agreed upon in the series. Humans and Cylons learn to live together and create a new race of beings. According to Sobchack (2007), humans in the films have begun to act more like machines while robots, computers, androids, and cyborgs have become more human. I found this to be true in the 2003 version. The humans try to hide their emotions on many occasions (like Admiral Cain), while the Cylons are often the most emotional and passionate characters in the series (like Boomer). Humanity in this series eventually becomes the combination of actual biological humans and the imitation Cylons along with their beliefs and traditions.

HEGEMONIC GENDER ROLES

In the 1978 version, women are told what to do by men on a regular basis. Lt. Athena is often told what to do not only by her father Commander Adama, but by Starbuck and Apollo. She typically obeys their commands. With Cassiopeia, hegemonic gender norms often can be represented in how men constantly give her orders. The doctor (her supervisor), Starbuck, Adama, and Apollo tell her what to do and she obeys even if she does not agree. Serina, just like Cassiopeia, she obeys every command a man gives her. She does stand up to men, like in episode four when Apollo tries to keep her from training as a pilot. However, Apollo makes it so he goes with her on each mission in order to protect her. Concerning Lt. Sheba, the only real instance of hegemonic gender norms regarding her occurs in episodes fifteen and sixteen when a supernatural being named Count Iblis takes over and controls her mind. He even “shares” her with Apollo since he believes that men and women should not be bound to one romantic partner.

Lt. Brie oftentimes makes major mistakes in flying and has to be corrected by Starbuck or Apollo. One interesting moment concerning the new female pilots takes place in episode five. The female pilots are discussing their recent battle with Cylons, but it sounds like they are gossiping. While the women are talking and laughing, Starbuck and Apollo talk about choosing curtains and Apollo’s marriage. The stereotypic roles seemed switched, but it appears that the men are mocking the women’s excitement over the battle because they feel left out since that is their usual realm.

In the newer version, women are often imprisoned or controlled, mainly by men. In season two, Cally shoots and kills Boomer and is imprisoned for a month, even though Boomer was a Cylon and the enemy. In season three, Ellen Tigh has sex with Number

One as trade for her husband's release from prison, and she keeps having sex with the Cylon. Number One eventually orders her to steal information from the human insurgency or he will imprison Saul again. Ellen does as Number One asks, but the insurgents discover her betrayal. Saul poisons her and holds her as she dies. D'Anna frightens Number One, so he has her memories, as well as her entire model line, boxed to keep her from finding the Final Five Cylons.

After Boomer shoots Adama, Colonel Tigh has her arrested, and he beats her once she is in the brig. After Boomer has resurrected on the Cylon ship, she begins a sexual relationship with Number One. She claims that he is teaching her how to be a better machine as well as teaching her about sexuality. Number One controls her every move and gives her orders which she obeys without question.

When Athena joins the fleet in episode seven of season two, Adama has her immediately thrown into the brig since she is a Cylon even though she has helped the crew several times. Later in that episode, Helo mocks her intelligence and calls her a dictionary ("Sorry I'm smarter than you."). She basically lives in the brig throughout this season, except when she gives birth to Hera. In season three episode twelve, Athena finds out the truth about her daughter: that the baby never died but that the president had hidden her and the Cylons eventually found her. Athena begs Helo to kill her so she can resurrect on the Cylon ship and get their daughter back (he agrees to do so). She also tells Helo that he has always been the strong one. In season four episode seven, Athena kills Natalie, a Number Six Athena believes is kidnapping her daughter, and Adama has her thrown in the brig. She is later released, but by episode thirteen the mutineers during a political coup capture her and threaten to rape her.

Caprica Six, in the beginning of season three, defends Baltar to the other Cylons, and Number One shoots her as punishment. Later in the season, when she helps Athena escape with Hera, Admiral Adama has her arrested once she reaches the fleet. Colonel Tigh and President Roslin often visit her to gain information on the Cylons which she freely gives. Caprica Six does not seem as strong as her angelic counterpart. She does make her own decisions, but she always seems to be controlled by her hot and cold feelings for Gaius Baltar.

Laura Roslin, at the end of season one, asks Starbuck to steal a Cylon raider and return to Caprica for the Arrow of Apollo which will help them find Earth. Adama becomes furious and orders her arrested so he can dissolve her presidency for inciting mutiny. In the beginning of season two, Roslin is in the brig. After Adama is shot and goes into a coma, Tigh has declared martial law. When Adama wakes, he relents and gives her back her presidential powers. In season three, during the Cylon Occupation, Baltar has her arrested so he can question her and to ask her to stop the insurgents' attacks. Roslin refuses, and later is taken for execution along with Baltar's vice president Tom Zarek.

Starbuck often obeys her superior officers, but is also reprimanded for insubordination from time to time. In season two, she joins the crew of the Battlestar Pegasus and is asked by Adama to kill Admiral Cain, which she was going to obey until Adama calls it off at the last minute. While in a command position, those under her undermine her authority in front of other pilots; however, she does reprimand them and gains back the usurper's respect eventually. During the Cylon Occupation, she is held captive by the Cylon Leoben because he wants to make her fall in love with him. In season four, when she returns from the dead and no one believes her story about finding

Earth, she holds President Roslin at gunpoint to get Adama to follow her coordinates to Earth. He has her thrown into the brig. She calls him “the president’s wet nurse” and he attacks her.

In the newer version, there are several occasions where women control men and fight back when men threaten them. Number Six always controls Baltar. Her voice often stays soft until Baltar upsets her, then she becomes violent. The ends of her words have a soft ‘ess’ sound at the end to mock a seductive tone. She also speaks condescendingly to Baltar when she orders him to do something and tells him “good boy.” She constantly mocks Baltar’s manhood as a method of control. Number Six tells Baltar that it is acceptable for him to commit suicide in episode thirteen of season three. When Caprica Six is held in the brig, Colonel Tigh visits her to gain information on the Cylons. During his visits, he becomes physically violent and hits her. She hits him back, knocking him to the floor.

Admiral Cain often has her orders obeyed, and if they are not, the person is severely punished. Her first mate was shot in the head, the families of civilians were killed, and she ordered the execution of Adama. However, her strict orders cause her downfall. In season two episode thirteen, Cain goes back to her quarters where Gina, a Number Six that Cain had her men beat and rape, is waiting for her. Gina is holding a gun and Cain says, “Frak [fuck] you.” Gina answers, “You’re not my type” and kills Cain.

Laura Roslin maintains her presidential power by ordering the fleet to do several missions, even ordering Adama to stop wasting resources. In episode seventeen of season two, she has to ban abortion to help repopulate humanity even though it goes against her personal beliefs. Roslin often gives orders to others that they obey even if they disagree. Baltar uses the abortion issue against her in the next election, and she attempts to rig the

election. Her plot is discovered and Baltar wins. In season three, she puts Baltar in the brig and treats him cruelly, authorizes drugs on him to get him to give up information on the Cylons, and sets up his trial for treason. She arrests rebels and uses manipulative tactics to control people in the fleet. She is also blamed for causing the Hera situation by lying about the baby's death.

In season four, Roslin has become secretive and controlling political, such as how she tries to completely control the judicial system in episode three. Zarek even calls her "a tyrant." In episodes six and seven, Roslin's secret of sharing the same dream as two Cylons has been leaked. She becomes angry and goes to see Caprica Six because she thinks that Caprica is the one who told the press the information. Caprica Six denies it, and Roslin tells her, "I don't care if you have to spend the night praying on your knees or just on your knees [implying that Caprica should perform fellatio on someone to get the information] you will tell me who is spreading these lies." Episode thirteen has the fleet in upheaval because of Tom Zarek's political coup. Roslin escapes to the Cylon Basestar of their Cylon allies. Zarek claims that he has killed Adama and orders her to surrender. Roslin finds strength within herself and says, "I swear it! I'm coming for all of you!"

President Roslin could arguably be called the most androgynous character in the show. She has a great power about her. She keeps the fleet stable by dealing with the many issues and rebellions that arise. She makes difficult decision, and does not let men tell her what to do. Even in her personal life, Laura chooses to stop her medication and to do as she pleases. Power does overtake her in the later seasons, like how she attempts to control the ability for groups to meet in public in order to control Baltar, but she tries to find her balance again. Roslin's obsession with power is not a commentary on her gender,

but rather on politicians in general who abuse the system whether they are male or female.

Hegemonic gender norms is one of the more common themes explored in both versions. In *The Original Series*, all of the women obey orders not only from commanding officers but from the men in the show. Apollo and Starbuck constantly tell women what to do whether it is to go back to the ship or what to do during a mission. Even women with power obey men. When a woman does make her own choice, she is scolded by a man. Lt. Dietra disobeys Apollo and leads the squadron of female pilots into battle thus causing the success of the mission. Apollo and Starbuck scold her for her disobedience. In the newer version, many of the female characters are in the military. Those women obey their commanding officers just as the men do. But, even those who are not in the military are often ordered to do things by men or scolded by men. However, those women oftentimes do not listen to the men. When Adama orders Roslin to take her medication, she refuses. Starbuck is constantly reprimanded for disobedience. One interesting trait of the newer version is that men take orders from women. Roslin, Admiral Cain, and Starbuck are all in positions of power, and are often obeyed by those under them. There are times that their power is questioned, but the same happens to the men in the show. Power appears to be a balanced trait in the newer version, thus making hegemonic gender norms not as obvious a theme.

Male characters are typically given more screen time even if the women have a major role in the plot of the show as is discussed by Zemach and Cohen (1986). Male side characters are even given more screen time than main female characters. For example, President Roslin has a pivotal role in series, but Lee, Adama, Tigh, and other

male side characters are often given more lines. The only time women are given a larger amount of screen time is if it is an episode that features that character.

Hegemony exists when the controlling forces of a society use the mass media to provide the subordinate classes with the concepts that allow them to make sense of their subordination (Lull 2003: 62). In this case, the subordinate class is women with men as the dominant class. The media promotes the socially accepted ideology which perpetuates hegemonic gender norms (Lull 2003: 63; Fiske 1987: 259-260). American television has relationships with those who seek to maintain this power relationship which keeps the cycle of hegemony going in this culture. Hegemonic gender norms are both reinforced and redefined in the newer version while they are typically just reinforced in the 1978 version. In the older version, women typically listen to and obey men. Men control what the women do on missions and in their daily lives. In the 2003 version, women often take orders from men, but women also give orders to men. Women are in more positions of power where their orders are more regularly obeyed. But, those who usually defy those orders are men. Laura is often defied by Adama, Zarek, and Baltar. Cain is defied by Adama.

GENDER STEREOTYPES

In the 1978 version, women are often sexualized and manipulative as well as overtly emotional. Athena in many episodes uses her femininity to get what she wants from men, as well as manipulates and whines when it concerns her father. But, men often tell her what to do and have to protect her. She rarely makes her own choices. Athena also emotes several times, such as when her brother Zak is killed. Athena cries while her father Adama stands silently behind her. Cassiopeia also uses her femininity to get what she wants and to control men, and she is more overtly sexual than any of the other characters. What is most interesting about her character is that the other characters judge for her sexuality when she is only controlling her own body sexually and Starbuck is much more sexually active. Serina acts the same as Athena and Cassiopeia. She manipulates to get what she wants, and often becomes impassioned when annoyed by Apollo which comes across as her acting hysterical (Cassiopeia and Athena are also guilty of this action).

In the newer version, women are also manipulative and sexualized. Ellen Tigh could be called a perfect example of a passive aggressive manipulator. Her time is mostly occupied by nagging her husband Colonel Saul Tigh (the first officer) and with getting drunk and flirting with other men. Many times, she lies about men hitting on her to make her husband jealous and to help further her own interests. Her sexuality remains reserved for maintaining control of Saul. In the beginning of season three, during the Cylon occupation of New Caprica, Ellen is shown having sex with the Cylon model Number One. They discuss sexual positions as well. Ellen fits the nagging wife stereotype. She is manipulative and lies to get ahead in the world. She does not care whom she hurts. Even

after her true nature is revealed, she still only cares about leading the other Cylons and controlling her husband.

Number Six, as previously mentioned controls Baltar and often is shown engaged in a sexual act with him. In episode thirteen of season one, she does allow Baltar to have sex with whom he wants as long as he only loves her (“Love isn’t about sex, Gaius.”). But, she gets jealous of Baltar’s attraction to Starbuck, so in episode fourteen she slams his head into a mirror as punishment. In season two, she is still aggressive sexually and offers Baltar advice. Number Six now wants to have a child with Baltar and tries to convince him that it is his destiny as ordained by God. In episode three, she says, “Be a man, Gaius,” and then “Now, you’re a man,” after he kills a man to protect Cally. During D’Anna’s torture of Baltar in episode seven of season three, Number Six keeps Baltar trapped in his mind on a fake beach where they have sex to keep him from feeling pain. She is constantly sexualized by the choice in revealing clothing, her language, and her sexual acts with Baltar.

Laura Roslin also does occasionally listen to her intuition and uses flattery to get men to do what she wants. Starbuck is one of the more sexually active women in the series. At the end of season one, Lee scolds her for having sex with Baltar and any one night stands she has had, so she punches him and he hits her back. In season two episode five, after Starbuck is injured on the mission on Caprica, the doctor in the hospital is giving Starbuck a pelvic exam and says, “You gotta keep that reproductive system healthy. It’s your most valuable asset these days” since healthy mothers are more valuable than soldiers in order to rebuild humanity. Starbuck responds, “I’m not a commodity. I’m a Viper pilot...I don’t want a child.” The doctor apologizes since he should have known that Starbuck would not a child since she was abused by a parent. She

cries and screams for him to get out of the room. During her escape from the hospital, she finds a room full of sedated human women being impregnated by the Cylons. She destroys the building and reunites with her friends.

In episode thirteen of season four, Starbuck mocks a fellow pilot for having an illegitimate child. He yells at her and says, “You frakked [fucked] half the fleet! What do you have to show for it?!” The male Starbuck is applauded for his use of women. He is rarely scolded for anything he does. Kara does all of the same actions, but she is constantly punished and scolded for having an active sexual life. This punishment for sexual activity coincides with the sexual double standard that men should be highly sexually active while women should be chaste and are seen as sluts if they are not chaste (England, Shafer, and Fogarty 2007: 584). The only time she emotes or tries to determine her own identity, she is shown as feminine with longer hair and being scolded by a man, such as Lee and Adama. Women could see Starbuck’s overt toughness as a step forward in the representation of women, while men will see her as a sexual object since she is constantly sexual.

In the newer version, women are often emotional and reinforce other gender stereotypes. Dualla emotes quite often in the show, typically by crying. Her emotions culminate when they find Earth devastated by nuclear war. She cannot handle it. In episode eleven of season four, she goes on a date with Lee where it seems she has forgiven him. At the end of the date, she walks into her quarters and shoots herself in the head out of despair. Her character could be labeled a sad, forgotten one that can be summed up in some dialogue from season two. In episode six, Admiral Adama is confiding his deepest fears to her. He does not like what she has to say, and she responds,

“You asked to talk to me, sir. Maybe because you think I don’t have anything to say, but I do.”

Boomer is often very emotional and cries and has to rely on Tyrol to help her in season one. In season four, she cannot stand Hera’s crying during the kidnapping and tries to drug Hera, but she begins to soften toward the girl and shares her projection of her dream life with her to calm Hera down for the shuttle ride to the Cylon home world. Once they reach the Basestar, Number One takes Hera from her. The girl starts to call for her and Boomer begins to cry. Boomer has to be one of the most emotional characters on the show. She is angry, afraid, or sad and emotes to the extreme. She cries and threatens to kill others when she does not get her way.

Laura Roslin also cries and emotes, such as when they find the devastated Earth and she becomes so distraught she has an emotional breakdown. For Starbuck, at the end of season two, she has taken on the role of the wife to Anders by cooking for him and caring for him when he is ill. During the beginning of season three when Leoben brings her daughter to her, Starbuck begins to treat the girl as her daughter and not just as a Cylon. During the exodus of the colonists, Anders finds her and she wants to rescue the girl. Leoben knocks her out, and, when she wakes, she fakes loving Leoben to give her the opportunity to kill him. She grabs the girl and escapes with Anders. Once on the Battlestar Galactica it is revealed that the girl was really a kidnapped daughter of a colonist. Starbuck hides her sadness over the trick.

The newer version also includes instances of attempted rape or rape that occurred off screen. Cally was almost raped by a prisoner in season one. Athena was almost raped by Cain’s crew in season two, but was rescued by Helo and Tyrol. She was almost raped again in the political coup in season four. Starbuck was held prisoner by Leoben who

often touched her and attempted to start a sexual encounter. Gina, a Number Six, was repeatedly raped by Cain's men off screen.

Women are also shown going against stereotypes in the newer version through their professions and roles. Cain is an Admiral. Roslin is President (the President in the Original Series was a man). Roslin even rescues Tom Zarek from execution in season three. Starbuck is a fighter pilot. Starbuck rescues Anders from execution when it is discovered that he is a Cylon in season four episode ten.

Gender stereotypes are highly explored in both versions and support the hegemonic gender norms. In The Original Series, all of the women are shown having some type of romantic feelings for men. The women are often depicted with heavy makeup and styled hair. All of the women are shown as maternal in some way: Athena teaches children, Cassiopeia often cares for Boxey, Serina is Boxey's mother, and Sheba helps care for the children of another character. The women are rarely included on missions unless it is absolutely necessary with the exception of Sheba. When included on the missions, they are often ordered around by men and often are left unprotected. The only reason women are allowed to be pilots is because all of the male pilots have become ill, and women are all that is left to form a decent squadron. Athena only has power because she is Adama's daughter. The women are highly emotional and often cry while the men remain stoic. Even the way the women are dressed is stereotypical: dresses, heels or heeled boots, and no side arm. Sheba again is the only exception. Women are also highly sexualized. Cassiopeia can be called the most sexualized female character, mainly to hide the fact that she is intelligent and often has important insight into situations. Her sexuality makes her opinions more palatable to the target audience: a male viewer.

In the newer version, stereotypes are also often common. Women again are often emotional and cry, but men also cry and emote. Women are occasionally shown in dresses and heels, but at more appropriate times like parties and on dates. Women are still highly associated with the maternal role. Athena is a mother as is Cally. Boomer cares for Hera as does Caprica Six. Number Six wants a child. Ellen believes that the Cylons are her children. Starbuck connects with Kacey when she believes that the girl is her daughter. President Roslin often cries when babies are born and was a former schoolteacher. Dualla babysits Hera for Athena and Helo. Admiral Cain remains the only female character not associated with motherhood or love for children in some way. Oftentimes, women nag their men about being home more and spending more time with their children. The audience is shown men being more involved with children as well as women having jobs outside being a mother, but it often creates tension in their relationships. Several women are also shown in heavy makeup, namely Roslin and the Cylons. Even when they are imprisoned, they are in heavy makeup and styled hair. Roslin rarely looks ill due to the makeup she applied. I was constantly asking myself where these women were getting eye shadow and lip gloss. The whole show is based on the destruction of human society and extends over several years yet women still have access to large quantities of beauty products.

Kimmel (2011) discusses the media and the role it plays in constructing gender identities (290). The media, as an institution, must maintain inequality by “creat[ing] the differences and then to attempt to conceal its authorship so that those differences seem to flow from the nature of things” (Kimmel 2011: 290). When one is shown images of inequality, it can cause a person to have more stereotypical ideas. “For example, the more television you watch, the more gender-stereotypic are your gender attitudes likely to be”

(Kimmel 2011: 295). If one were to watch the 1978 version only, the viewer would be exposed to extreme stereotypic ideas of women's role in society and in relationships. If one were to watch the 2003 version, one would still see very gender stereotypic ideas, such as women being mothers, acting as teachers, and maintaining a certain physical appearance with the use of beauty products. But, the viewer would also see women having careers outside of the home, wearing minimal makeup on a daily basis, and having a destiny more than as a wife. There is a definite improvement between both versions in terms of stereotypic gender norms, especially concerning women's careers. One possible reason for this improvement in gender representation in terms of career could be the fact that more women are in the workforce today (58.1% of women) than in the 1970's, and women are making 82% of what men make compared to the 62% women made compared to men in the 1970's (Department of Labor 2012). However, there are still some gender stereotypes perpetuated in the new version.

In the newer version, I noticed an interesting trend. More women are shown being murdered or committing suicide out of despair. Dualla, Starbuck, Caprica Six, Gina (another Six), and Kat (a pilot) all commit suicide due to some depression. Cally attempts suicide for the same reason. Admiral Cain, D'Anna, Boomer, Tory Foster (one of the Final Five), Ellen, Natalie (a Six), Caprica Six, and Cally were all murdered either out of revenge or punishment. Men are only shown being killed either in battle or through legal execution. Only Number One commits suicide and only to avoid being killed by the humans.

One way to interpret this suicide/murder trend is by looking at the situations in which these suicides and murders took place. All of the women who attempt or commit suicide do so because they allow their emotions to take over their rational mind. A

common stereotype of women is that their emotions control them while men are controlled by rational thoughts. All of the women, who are murdered, are often murdered as punishment for some for committing some transgression even if that transgression is small. Oftentimes, the transgressions committed are worthy of a trial by jury, but another character takes the law into their own hands and doles out the punishment. Men are only killed through legal and military means after some time of trial. The only suicide is due to Number One's cowardice at being executed by the humans and Cylon allies to the humans. All of the men's death fit with the stereotype of men being stronger emotionally than women. However, according to the Center for Disease Control (2013), men commit suicide at a significantly higher rate than women, often because women more often seek help when emotionally unstable than men. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, men are murdered more often than women, but men also constitute 90% of offenders (Cooper and Smith 2011). This trend further illustrates that society believes that women are weaker emotionally and more vulnerable and perpetuates this idea even though the statistics do not correlate with this concept.

Another interesting trait I noticed in the newer version is that all women in the military are called "sir" by lower ranking officers. Any civilian women in power, such as President Roslin, are called "sir" by all military personnel. The women are only given respect by utilizing a masculine term, and not "ma'am" or some other feminine term. President Roslin is also called "Madame President" by Adama and civilians, so respect and rank in the military are masculinized.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

After comparing the two versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, I have concluded that the more hegemonic and stereotypic gender norms were more common in the original version, but still exist in the newer version. There were women who did not fit within that role or moments when some women go against that norm. Sheba is the best fighter pilot and does not wear makeup, women form a new fighter pilot squadron, and women voice their opinions about situations all go against the stereotype. But, women are highly sexualized and are shown obeying men to make those moments of going against the norm more acceptable. In American society, women are still very much sexualized as they were in the 1970s. In the 1978 version, women are mainly shown as romantic counterparts, while in the 2003 version women are still romantic counterparts but they offer more to the series. But, sexual counters with women are common and graphic, and many of the women can be described as sexy, such as Number Six and Athena.

Hegemony as a framework for the media is apparent in both versions, the 1978 version more so than the 2003 version. In the newer version, women definitely are more powerful and have a more egalitarian role with men. They are pilots, warriors, wear little to no makeup and the same uniforms as men, they give orders, and even share bathing facilities. Women constantly subvert the orders of men and make their own decisions. Yet, the audience still sees women acting as the manipulative wife, as being maternal,

being defined by their romantic relationships with men, and as being emotional. Men are shown caring for kids and emoting, but more often than not it is the women doing these actions. Women have to be masculinized to be seen as tough. Only President Roslin truly balances ascribed male and female traits. The comparison does show some major progress in the media at portraying women, but there also remain some stereotypes that have yet to be removed or at least balanced with male stereotypes. An audience could interpret this comparison as the dominant male group still pushing these gendered norms onto individuals, but one can see a change toward a more egalitarian society. However, this may not necessarily be the case.

One important aspect of this work is the opportunity for multiple interpretations of moments and themes within the show. Stuart Hall (1973) states that the message in the show can be vague and interpreted in many ways depending on the viewer and the viewer's past experiences. This research attempted to get at what the author was trying to convey.

Each theme and its subsequent trends can be interpreted in several ways. One example of this multiple interpretation concerns the episodes that contain instances of rape or attempted rape in the 2003 version of the series. There are a few episodes that contain scenes of rape or violence against women. These moments are not even explored in the 1978 version. There are two reasons why this violence is being shown. The first reason could be that the show is trying to oppress women by perpetuating the stereotype that women are vulnerable. The second reason could be that in modern media, violence against women is now shown in order to bring awareness to the issue and open up discussion about it. In the 1970's, the concept of rape was only just becoming more prevalent in the public's consciousness. Today, rape and its use in war and as an

oppressing factor are something often talked about in politics and other venues. The majority of the violence against females revolves around female Cylons who are not seen as human. This occurrence is interesting since for centuries women were seen as in some places still are seen as less than men. Having the Cylon women as the victims further illustrates the fact that women are not seen as human if a man believes raping her or committing violence against her is acceptable.

Another trend that can be interpreted in multiple ways is the sexual double standard revolving around Starbuck. In the 1978 version, Starbuck is a sexually active male who is applauded for his conquests. In the 2003 version, Starbuck is a sexually active female who desires sex but is scolded verbally and physically for acting on her desires. They are the same character, but the female experiences consequences of her actions. There are three ways to view this discrepancy in characterization. The first way is that 2003 Starbuck is truly being reprimanded for being a sexually active female when women should be chaste while men can sleep with whom they wish. The second way is that the 2003 author was trying to illustrate how original Starbuck was creating that double standard while the new one is just acting on her emotions. In the newer version, men are occasionally scolded for having illicit sexual encounters, but attention is more often drawn to Starbuck possibly as a way of criticizing the double standard. The final way to look at this discrepancy is to show that whether male or female, being careless about your sexual entanglements can hurt you emotionally. Starbuck in the 1978 version cannot make an emotional connection with women and only has physical experiences. Starbuck in the 2003 version has the same problem with men, but the audience sees her evolve into a more stable person who begins to value deeper connections with others.

Some scenes or moments within episodes can also be interpreted in numerous ways. In the boxing scene in season three episode nine, Starbuck and Apollo box each other in order to work out their problems, a tradition among the crew. Their match becomes extremely violent. It ends in a standoff where they hug and apologize to each other. One way to interpret this scene is to believe that the show is advocating the typical masculine way of resolving conflict by using violence. However, another way to look at this scene is to see it as a moment where a man and a woman are physically and emotionally equal. They come together to work out their issues, and they both hold their own and inflict the same amount of physical damage to their opponent.

There are several trends that can only be interpreted in one way. An example of this occurrence is women's role within the show and their careers. Even though hard science fiction is often classified as masculine, this show illustrates a change. In the 1978 version, women have little to no part in the plot development in the series and their jobs are stereotypical women's jobs. In the 2003 version, women play major roles in the plot development of the series and their jobs are more varied, even having stereotypically male jobs like mechanics and fighter pilots. Women are in the workforce now more than they were in the 1970's. Women are entering fields that are often deemed male dominated. There has not yet been a female president, but it is becoming more and more possible with the advent of Hilary Clinton running in 2008 and Sarah Palin running for Vice President that same year. This trend shows the definite change in the labor force over the last thirty to forty years.

With the trends that have multiple meanings, it is difficult to make definitive statements about what the shows say about the social context in which they take place. With the trends that can be interpreted in one way, it is easier to make those more

definitive statements. What I can say is that the comparison provides an insight into the view and role of women in United States society. In the 1970's, women were visible but they were still be relegated into their stereotypic gender roles. As nurses, secretaries, and busty vixens, they did little more than act as plot devices for the men. In the 2000's, women are more visible. They participate in all aspects of the show. From observing this show and looking at the trends, it is my belief that the 2003 version is bringing to light issues concerning women that are only now getting recognition.

In my earlier discussion of rape and violence against women, I said that one way of interpreting this trend is to see it as a way of discussing the issue of harming women. Combined with women being given positions of power, positions they have still not earned in reality, women are represented in the 2003 version as being equal to men. It calls into question the view that women cannot do jobs ascribed to men. Women are shown as competent leaders and warriors. Women are shown being physically equal to men. With so many occurrences of trends being able to be interpreted as showing equality between men and women, it can be concluded that the series advocates equality in occupation, in relationships, in sexuality, and in characteristics such as emotional expression.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

This study provided quite a qualitative analysis of *Battlestar Galactica*, a science fiction television show, in its portrayal of women. The comparison yielded was very thorough and interesting since the original series is completely retold and expanded upon, which is not very common. The switching of several male characters to female characters allows for an interesting contrast. Some issues did arise however. If I were to do this research again, I would only look at a few characters to focus even more on their story arc. I would most likely choose Athena, Starbuck, Caprica Six, Admiral Cain, and President Roslin from the newer version and Cassiopeia and Sheba from The Original Series. I may also include the male Starbuck to have a more detailed comparison of that character. I would also limit the themes to Humanity, Romantic Relationships, Hegemony, and Stereotypes again to strengthen the data. The addition of another coder, possibly a male coder, would also help with the multiple interpretation issue and allow for a more in-depth analysis.

The follow up research could do one of two studies. The first could interview those who have watched the shows, or fans, to see what they took away from the shows concerning gender roles. The second could be to have subjects who have not previously watched the show watch it in a controlled setting and have a follow up questionnaire to determine how the subjects interpreted the gender roles. My study allows for a more

well-rounded analysis of society's utilization of media and how individuals consume that media.

This research study does go against the results from my previous study on Disney films. In that study, films in the 1970s exhibited more gender equality than films in the 2000s. There could be several reasons for the difference. The original study was a content analysis that did not look at an in depth overall analysis. In this study, I looked at the same show in two different decades. In the Disney study, I was looking at different films over several decades. The films occasionally are similar in plot, but the type of comparison is different.

Overall, this research has helped to show a true change in the media's portrayal of women. Science fiction offers a means to discuss social issues and norms in a safe way since it is usually set in an alternate universe or another planet. Women are given more power and there is even a female president who maintains stability in an uncertain time. Women are warriors who protect their civilization. Women are essential to the plot development of the show even if there are some stereotypes that remain. The 2003 version of *Battlestar Galactica* was influential, so much so that the UN invited the creators and the actors who played Admiral Adama (Edward James Olmos) and President Roslin (Mary McDonnell) to speak about the show's representation of politics, war, and terrorism in 2009 (United Nations Webcast Archives 2009). The panel did not discuss gender, but the fact that this show was seen as a representation of the modern world provides some credence to the fact that the gender representation in this show is reflective of modern gender views. The media reflects the culture, the bad aspects as well as the good ones.

FIGURE ONE

Coding Sheet

Television Show: *Battlestar Galactica* Year: _____ Episode Number: _____

Character: _____

Toughness/Physical Appearance:

Friendship:

Romantic Relationships:

Role Within the Show:

Role as a Character (career/job):

Language/Discourse:

Humanity:

Hegemony:

Stereotypes:

Other:

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